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NEW ESSAYS ON OLD SUBJECTS.

By NEWTON CROSLAND.

No. I.—PRAYER.

WHAT is Prayer? It is simply asking God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. I propose in this essay to point out what I venture to consider to be the best mode of availing ourselves of this wonderful and beneficent privilege. The most prominent mistake which I have observed in the ordinary conception and use of prayer, is that people are apt to make too great a mental effort in giving it birth. We should remember that nothing is nearer to us than God, and that He is attentive to the slightest worthy application. To approach Him it is not necessary to be hysterical, or to make our minds nervous catapults for discharging our petitions at the Deity. All that is required to render prayer effective, is to unite it with the simplest earnestness and confidence. When a child asks its parent for some food the little suppliant does not strain its nervous system in making its wants known. In the same gentle spirit of trusting calmness and freedom from doubt should we importune the Most High to succour and guide us, and even to grant us special mercies. Truly, we must become as little children. One of the first messages we received from the spirits was very significant, and expressed in these words: "Do not pray to us—pray to God, and He will give us instructions concerning you."

The potent influence of prayer to God, in elevating and controlling the thoughts and actions of man, is theoretically accepted and maintained by a large portion of the human race; but practically we have too irregularly and unfaithfully tried the

efficacy of prayer in regulating and benefiting our daily lives. We all know the old story of the lazy waggoner who prayed to Hercules to lift the waggon from the mud in which it was embedded. The god, it is said, answered the petition by rebuking the sluggishness of the man, and recommending him to put his own shoulder to the wheel. This fable has been too often misinterpreted, as if it was meant to teach the superiority of human exertions in comparison with appeals for Divine assistance. How much truer is the lesson that without the prayer the god would never have descended to rouse the dormant energy of the labourer, and nerve him to the execution of his task? We may be sure that if we want to succeed in any endeavour that is right to be made, prayer to God is the most effectual means of raising our motives to a high principle of duty, and stimulating our righteous resolves to triumphant performance. When men are baffled and angry they often resort to imprecations as a safety-valve to their feelings: they had better always try a prayer; the relief would be more speedy, more comforting, and more permanent.

We must be careful that we do not address to the Deity mere selfish begging-letter applications; nor subject His power to our moral tests and experiments; nor may we presume on our influence in His omniscient counsels. Another point we must very strictly and tenderly observe in offering up prayer to God, and that is, not to attempt to approach Him with worldly compliments. To Him flatteries are a miserable mockery; and yet He is so lenient and appreciative that He is little likely to resent this offspring of our meanness and ignorance. What He requires is our duty, love and loyalty—not a crawling, subservient sycophancy. He wishes us to be His friends—not His slaves. We cannot sneak into His favour; nor is there any certain passport to His succour, but our willingness to accept His methods of redemption. How vain and frivolous is it to tell Him that “He is good and great!” “*La gloire*” is a very poor thing in His estimation. It is well to believe in His “goodness and power,” but this belief must be something more precious than His pious toadies are qualified to realise. “Singing to the praise and glory of God” is a healthful and Divine exercise when it is practised—not merely as a formal system of musical etiquette in religious worship—but as the outburst of our sympathetic joy in the harmonies of God’s government of the world, and as the expression of our enlightened recognition of His gracious personal presence in the guardianship of all His creatures!

Although we may often find it necessary to struggle against our vices and passions, prayer need never be a wrestling-

match with the Deity. In its true and faithful method, prayer is so little fatiguing, that if its exercise is more arduous than opening and shutting our eyes, we may be sure that we are on the wrong track, and have got hold of the wrong thing: directly it becomes a strain, it is exhausting and profitless. Properly conducted, it is as easy as breathing, and may be carried on as interminably. It supplies its own energy, its own sustenance; and its activity can only terminate with our consciousness.

It is so self-sustaining, that it may be practised "without ceasing," and wrought into the substance of every daily occupation. It may be blended with the performance of every duty.

To the uninitiated this view of prayer seems too simple to be credible—too easy to be adopted, as an alleviation of the ills of life; and yet its efficacy is infallible, and its benefits can be experienced by all who resort to it, in the spirit and direction which I have endeavoured to inculcate. The scientific intellect and the heart and mind of man, in their natural and earthly state, can scarcely believe that there exists so obvious and certain a remedy for the trials and anxieties of life. Like Naaman, the Syrian leper, we are inclined to feel mocked unless we are called upon "to do some great thing" in order to be cured. "To wash and be clean" seems to be too common-place a prescription to be acceptable to the spiritually impure. Prayer is a bath, in which the soul may be purified from its troubles and apprehensions; and to those who doubt its healing virtues, we can only say, try it, and you will find it both efficacious and fascinating. But, although, for anxiety, anger, and sorrow, it is a specific almost miraculous in its operation, we must recollect that man is such a complex being, that no one thing can be considered an absolute panacea for any specific evil to which his nature is liable. The "conditions" in which we are involved must be considered, qualified, and met. We must not run away with the idea that we can by prayer altogether avoid the consequences of our own foolish and wilful conduct: we cannot thus throw into confusion the laws of cause and effect, nor can we so easily and cavalierly upset the terms of human existence. We must not be surprised if our lives, ungoverned and untrained by the sacred principle of prayer, should, at first, experience little benefit from taking a final and convenient refuge under a protection which we have too long neglected. We may torture ourselves and others, but God never tortures us: whenever He ordains a penalty for any offence, He mercifully provides a means of escape from the misery which we bring upon ourselves. In every particular God's government

is guided by the highest wisdom, justice, and mercy; and the absorbing study of its infinite relations to the care and redemption of man may profitably occupy the mission of a lifetime. Every sphere of being, from the lowest to the highest order of our natures, is regulated by its own suitable laws and conditions; and if we wish to experience the blessings of a more tender and gracious dispensation than that which has justly and rigorously wrought our discipline and punishment, we can, through prayer and the exercise of worthy thoughts and deeds, deserve more celestial privileges, and climb to the duties, enjoyments and legislation of a higher life. In this mode a grander existence may be made to supersede the laws and phenomena to which we have been accustomed in our lower state.

Fortunate is it for us that God answers our prayers in His own true, wise way—not in our way, which may be foolish and short-sighted. If He always took the same view of what is good for us that we considered to be the most advisable and beneficial, and if our requests were granted as specifically and definitely as they were made, we should be tempted to do nothing else but pray. Every other form of activity would be abandoned in favour of resorting to such an easy, convenient, and profitable plan as that of prayer. Our genius, enterprise, and energy would dwindle into a life of mere supplication and dependence. One half of man's noblest qualities and gifts would, by disuse, remain undeveloped, and we should cease to work for ourselves when we made the cheap discovery that God gave us all that we needed. No condition of soul could be conceived more unworthy of the purpose for which we were created than this state of helpless and degenerate piety.

There is one plausible theory prevalent, which endeavours to account for the apparent efficacy of prayer, by supposing that it does nothing more than favour the presence of holy and gentle thoughts which divert the mind from the contemplation of antagonistic and unpleasant sensations, thereby enabling the will to become the parent of purer conduct and a more religious life, and to promote the gentle exercise and cultivation of worthy ideas and noble principles. In this view of prayer there is a certain pleasing and reasonable charm, which is so far satisfactory to ordinary intelligence and piety; but, like many other conventional theories, this theory does not cover all those facts and experiences of humanity with which it ought to deal. It is incomplete and uncertain in its conception; and to the Spiritualist it must be deemed entirely unacceptable.

Nothing short of the admission that God really and literally sends his angels to our succour, in answer to our prayers, will satisfy our minds, or explain the phenomena of which we have

the most tangible evidence. The express agency of spiritual messengers, is the only explanation we can possibly accept of all the aspects which surround this transcendent and tremendous mystery. To the Spiritualist, however, prayer presents no difficulty and no mystery. He knows that spirits are attracted to aid or molest him according to the quality of his thoughts, disposition and conduct; and he also knows that they exercise a marvellous influence over the state of his soul and body. How many physical maladies spring from spiritual causes! The passions of the mind disturb the nervous circulation; this disturbance affects the condition of the blood, and the result is organic or functional disease. Prayer is the most potent means of correcting the first element in this process of disorder. Through the means of clairvoyance I have frequently been enabled to ascertain the mode in which prayer has been answered. A gifted clairvoyante has described to me angels sent on special errands, and to perform specific acts and duties, which I have silently and secretly prayed might be accomplished.

Most answers to prayer are too sacred to be babbled about before a mocking world. I could give numerous instances, if I were not deterred by the apparent profanity of making them public, and thus committing a breach of confidence towards one's guardian angels; but exhortation and exposition are more effective when they are supported by examples. I shall, therefore, confine myself to two or three minor isolated cases of no great moment, but sufficient as illustrations of my experience and doctrine.

A friend of mine, Captain, now Lieutenant-Colonel D——n, once resided at Plumstead, about four miles from my then abode. One Sunday, in the year 1857, about 3.15 p.m., I was dining alone, and I was very desirous of seeing this friend. I said to myself, I wonder whether a prayer would fetch him. Accordingly I prayed that he might be sent to me. About an hour and a quarter after that prayer was uttered, he rapped at my door. On my expressing my surprise and pleasure at seeing him, he gave me the following account of himself. He said:—“Rather more than an hour ago, I was lounging on the sofa, reading a book to my wife, and not even thinking of you, when suddenly, although I was in a humour very reluctant to be disturbed from my luxurious indulgence, I became restless and unable to continue my reading. I jumped up and exclaimed to my wife, ‘I can’t read any longer; I must go and see Crosland.’ I started off accordingly, and here I am. I came in such a hurry, that, although I met my sister, I merely nodded to her, and did not stop to speak to her.” We then compared notes, and were amazed at the “unconscious cerebration,” “the reflex

action of our brains," and "the curious coincidence," which had occurred.

One day in March, 1858, early in the week, I called on a friend at whose house scarlet fever and typhus were raging. On the Thursday, I felt very ill. On the following Saturday I was engaged, with a marvellous clairvoyante friend, to dine at Sir Samuel Ellis's, at Charlton; but on the morning of that day, I sent word to this clairvoyante friend, who resided near, that "I was too unwell to meet her at dinner." As I did not know what was the matter with me, I never imagined that she could know more about my illness than I knew myself. I was unable to swallow anything without great pain; and when I got up in the morning I fell down insensible. As soon as I regained consciousness, I crawled to my bed and prayed to God to help me. After that prayer no persuasion would have induced me to send for a doctor; but by-and-bye, about eleven o'clock, a.m., my clairvoyante friend came round to my house, saw my servant, told her that I had caught a fever, and she left some homœopathic medicines for my use. The next day she saw me, and in a mesmeric state prescribed for me: she described the inside of my throat, the number and colour of the pustules there, and informed me that I should be free from pain on the following Thursday. On the Wednesday I had no hope that this prediction would be fulfilled, as swallowing was then very painful to me; and I generally prefer believing in prophecies after they have come true. However, on the Thursday, I was able to take food without suffering, and I felt once more capable of enjoying life. On the occasion of her first visit to me on the Sunday, she told me that on the previous Saturday, when I sent her a message about my illness, my guardian angel appeared to her, described to her the nature of my illness—scarlatina, the remedies to be taken, and the treatment to be adopted.

On the Friday evening, when I took to my bed, a very remarkable circumstance occurred abroad. My wife, my sister, and a friend were then in the Hotel Munich (München), Vienna. In the room which they occupied there was a French clock which did not go: suddenly in the evening, while they were sitting round the fire, this clock, to their great astonishment, began striking. It struck seven three times, and then subsided again into motionless silence. The cause and reason of this singular and surprising phenomenon we never ascertained. I was sick seven days, convalescent seven days, and I took seven medicines during my illness. Whether these groups of seven had any mysterious connection with the striking of the clock we could not discover. To our untutored perception this incident seems like a purposeless specimen of supernatural

symbolism. That it was accomplished by spiritual agency is the only explanation I can offer; and perhaps its occurrence was intended as an illustration of the possibility of miraculous intervention in the affairs of man.

The last instance I shall give of answer to prayer is slight, but significant and instructive. One evening in 1856 or 1857, I was sitting for manifestations at a small table with my wife and a lady friend. The message that was then being given to me through tilts of the table, purported to be from the spirit of my departed sister. The friend who was sitting with us irritated me exceedingly by her ridiculous inexperience, but I kept my irritability safely suppressed in my own breast; in courtesy to our guest no tone or look was suffered to betray my anger. The lady occupied herself in frivolously and eagerly guessing at the words before they were half spelt, and generally guessing wrongly. My wrath was rising to an uncomfortable degree, when, all at once, the table refused to respond to my alphabet, and rolled about as if it were unable to take care of itself. After vainly trying to bring the table to a proper sense of its duty, I confided the alphabet to my wife, left her to manage the *séance* and to ascertain the cause of the disturbance. The spirit then gave us this communication:—"We cannot finish our message to N. C. *because he is irritable.*" Here was an unexpected disclosure! Both ladies exclaimed at once, "Are you irritable? What is the matter?" I confessed to the irritability, but, out of politeness, I did not reveal the cause. The spirit continued in answer to our enquiries: "N. C. can cure his irritability by praying to God." I immediately prayed to God silently, and asked Him "to remove the feelings of irritability from my soul." In less than a minute after this prayer was offered, the table resumed its composure and bowed towards me; the spirit then took up its message at the word where the communication had been dropped, and finished it as regularly as if there had been no interruption. It, however, tacked on this valuable piece of information: "When you are irritable you alter and darken your atmosphere, and then good and bright spirits cannot approach you." This precious injunction has influenced and guided the whole of my subsequent life, and it has done more to cure me of my darling propensity than all the other advice and discipline which I ever experienced.

In spite of all my attempts at originality in treating the subject of the efficacy of prayer, I have made only one great discovery, and that is that I have nothing new to teach. I am inclined to regard this result as the most valuable part of my labours. The grand conclusions which all my experience has compelled me to adopt are those which were expounded eighteen

hundred years ago, and I am not aware of any philosophy or religion which is any improvement upon what was then revealed. The lesson I have learnt is that to render prayer efficacious three conditions are necessary: (1) Faith, (2) Desert, and (3) Propriety of Petition. There is no difficulty in realising these conditions. To possess them we have only to choose to grasp them: they are always ready awaiting our acceptance.

When Lord Palmerston once told a deputation that as a remedy for cholera they had better resort to drainage and cleanliness than to offering up prayers on fast-days, although, in a low sense, he was quite right; he was more pungently witty and epigrammatic than sympathetically wise. With playful antagonism he set the practical scoffers laughing at the theoretical "religious world;" but he did not feel and realise the magical truth that if we want the willing heart, the earnest mind, the conscientious effort, and the industrious hand in the thorough accomplishment of any needful reform, we cannot more effectually attain our object than by asking our Father in heaven to aid the people with His inspiration, His blessing, and His guidance; and to encourage and enlighten them in the cheerful and zealous execution of their great task. Sanitary treatises are all the more attractive and beneficial when they are circulated with our prayers. He who begins by praying well will certainly end by working well. What is true of an individual is, in this instance, true of a nation. While we are a praying nation we can never become degraded. If any tyrannical foe lay a sacrilegious hand upon the ark of our civil and religious liberty, the earnest prayers of good men have power to bring down the succouring host of heaven—the legions of God! The angels of the Almighty can be, in an instant, sent from town to town, from city to city, from mountain to mountain, and from valley to valley, to rouse up the elect souls of those whose mission and privilege it is to live or die in the cause of holiness!

HYMNS FOR THE SPIRITUAL CHURCH.

ASCENSION.

Now—passed beyond the mortal strife,
The risen Christ we celebrate;
That pure divinely human life
Is perfected and consummate.

Enfeebled by our secret doubt,
Harassed by foes within the gate,
Assailed by enemies without,
That round our daily pathway
wait;

By conflict with the evil power,
And conquest o'er each darker mood,
Through Faith and Love—our richest
dower—

And sacrifice for others' good;
Our spirits may ascend to Thine,
O Christ! in those immortal spheres,
Where all-pervading Love divine
Enfolds and fills the eternal years!

T. S.

THE MINISTRATION OF OUR DEPARTED FRIENDS.

By HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

"It is a beautiful belief,
That ever round our head
Are hovering, on viewless wings,
The spirits of the dead."

WHILE every year is taking one and another from the ranks of life and usefulness, or the charmed circle of friendship and love, it is soothing to remember that the spiritual world is gaining in riches through the poverty of this.

In early life, with our friends all around us, hearing their voices, cheered by their smiles, death and the spiritual world are to us remote, misty, and half-fabulous; but, as we advance in our journey, and voice after voice is hushed, and form after form vanishes from our side, and our shadow falls almost solitary on the hill-side of life, the soul, by a necessity of its being, tends to the unseen and spiritual, and pursues in another life those it seeks in vain in this.

For, with every friend that dies, dies also some especial form of social enjoyment, whose being depended on the peculiar character of that friend; till, late in the afternoon of life, the pilgrim seems to himself to have passed over to the unseen world in successive portions half his own spirit; and poor, indeed, is he who has not familiarized himself with that unknown bourne whither, despite himself, his soul is earnestly tending.

One of the deepest and most imperative cravings of the human heart, as it follows its beloved ones beyond the veil, is for some assurance that they still love and care for us. Could we firmly believe this, bereavement would lose half its bitterness. As a German writer beautifully expresses it, "Our friend is not wholly gone from us; we see across the river of death, in the blue distance, the smoke of his cottage;" hence the heart, always creating what it desires, has ever made the guardianship and ministration of departed spirits a favourite theme of poetic fiction.

But is it, then fiction? Does Revelation, which gives so many hopes which nature had not, give none here? Is there no sober certainty to correspond to the inborn and passionate craving of the soul? Do departed spirits in verity retain any knowledge of what transpires in this world, and take any part in its scenes? All that revelation says of a spiritual state is more intimation than assertion; it has no distinct treatise, and teaches nothing apparently of set purpose, but gives vague,

glorious images, while now and then some accidental ray of intelligence looks out—

Like eyes of cherubs shining
From out the veil that hid the ark.

But out of all the different hints and assertions of the Bible, we think a better inferential argument might be constructed to prove the ministration of departed spirits, than for many a doctrine which has passed in its day for the height of orthodoxy.

First, then the Bible distinctly says that there is a class of invisible spirits who minister to the children of men: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation?" It is said of little children that "their angels do always behold the face of our Father which is in heaven." This last passage, from the words of our Saviour, taken in connection with the well-known tradition of His time, fully recognizes the idea of individual guardian spirits, for God's government over mind is, it seems, throughout, one of intermediate agencies, and these not chosen at random, but with the nicest reference to their adaptation to the purpose intended. Not even the All-Seeing, All-Knowing One was deemed perfectly adapted to become a human Saviour without a human experience. Knowledge intuitive, gained from above, of human wants and woes was not enough; to it must be added the homeborn certainty of consciousness and memory; the Head of all mediation must become human. Is it likely, then, that, in selecting subordinate agencies, this so necessary a requisite of a human life and experience is overlooked? While around the throne of God stand spirits, now sainted and glorified, yet thrillingly conscious of a past experience of sin and sorrow, and trembling in sympathy with temptations and struggles like their own, is it likely that He would pass by these souls, thus burning for the work, and commit it to those bright abstract beings whose knowledge and experience are comparatively so distant and so cold?

It is strongly in confirmation of this idea that in the transfiguration scene (which seems to have been intended purposely to give the disciples a glimpse of the glorified state of their Master) we find Him attended by two spirits of earth, Moses and Elias, "which appeared with Him in glory, and spake of His death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." It appears that these so long departed ones were still mingling in deep sympathy with the tide of human affairs, not only aware of the present, but also informed as to the future. In coincidence with this idea are all those passages which speak of the redeemed of earth as being closely and indissolubly identified with Christ, members of His body, of His flesh, and His bones. It is not to

be supposed that those united to Jesus above all others by so vivid a sympathy and community of interests, are left out as instruments in that great work of human regeneration which so engrosses him ; and when we hear Christians spoken of as kings and priests unto God, as those who shall judge angels, we see it more than intimated that they are to be the partners and actors in that great work of spiritual regeneration of which Jesus is the head.

What then ? May we look among the band of ministering spirits for our own departed ones ? Whom would God be more likely to send us ? Have we in heaven a friend who knew us to the heart's core ? a friend to whom we have confessed our weaknesses and deplored our griefs ? If we are to have a ministering spirit, who better adapted ? Have we not memories which correspond to such a belief ? When our soul has been cast down, has never an invisible voice whispered, " There is lifting up ? " Have not gales and breezes of sweet and healing thought been wafted over us, as if an angel had shaken from his wings the odours of Paradise ? Many a one, we are confident, can remember such things. And whence come they ? Why do the children of the pious mother, whose grave has grown green and smooth with years, seem often to walk through perils and dangers fearful and imminent as the crossing Mohammed's fiery gulf on the edge of a drawn sword, and yet walk unhurt ? Ah ! could we see that attendant form, that face, where the angel conceals not the mother, our question would be answered.

It may be possible that a friend is sometimes taken because the Divine One sees that his ministry can act more powerfully from the unseen world than amid the infirmities of mortal intercourse. Here the soul, distracted and hemmed in by human events and by bodily infirmities, often scarce knows itself, and makes no impression on others correspondent to its desires.

The mother would fain electrify the heart of her child ; she yearns and burns in vain to make her soul effective on its soul, and to inspire it with a spiritual and holy life ; but all her own weaknesses, faults and mortal cares, cramp and confine her, till death breaks all fetters, and then, first truly alive, risen, purified, and at rest, she may do calmly, sweetly, and certainly what, amid the tempests and tossings of life, she laboured for painfully and fitfully. So, also, to generous souls who burn for the good of man, who deplore the shortness of life, and the little that is permitted to any individual agency on earth, does this belief open a heavenly field. Think not, father or brother, long labouring for man, till thy sun stands on the western mountains, think not that thy day in this world is over. Perhaps, like Jesus, thou hast lived a human life, and gained a human

experience, to become, under and like Him, a Saviour of thousands; thou hast been through the preparation, but thy real work of good, thy full power of doing, is yet to begin.

But again: there are some spirits (and those of earth's choicest) to whom, so far as enjoyment to themselves or others is concerned, this life seems to have been a total failure. A hard hand from the first, and all the way through life, seems to have been laid upon them; they seem to live only to be chastened and crushed, and we lay them in the grave at last in mournful silence. To such, what a vision is opened by this belief! This hard discipline has been the school and task-work by which their soul has been fitted for their invisible labours in a future life, and when they pass the gates of the grave, their course of benevolent acting first begins, and they find themselves delighted possessors of what through many years they have sighed for—the power of doing good. The year just passed, like all other years, has taken from a thousand circles the sainted, the just, and the beloved; there are spots in a thousand graveyards which have become this year dearer than all the living world; but in the loneliness of sorrow how cheering to think that our lost ones are not wholly gone from us! They still may move about in our homes, shedding around an atmosphere of purity and peace, promptings of good and reproofs of evil. We are compassed about by a cloud of witnesses, whose hearts throb in sympathy with every effort and struggle, and who thrill with joy at every success. How should this thought check and rebuke every worldly feeling and unworthy purpose, and enshrine us, in the midst of a forgetful and unspiritual world, with an atmosphere of heavenly peace! They have overcome, have risen, are crowned, glorified; but still they remain to us, our assistants, our comforters, and in every hour of darkness their voice speaks to us: "So we grieved, so we struggled, so we fainted, so we doubted; but we have overcome, we have obtained, we have seen, we have found, and in our victory behold the certainty of thy own."

WITCHCRAFT IN WARWICKSHIRE.—It is worthy of note that at Warwick Assizes, on December 15th, 1875, during the trial of James Haywood (who was found to have been insane at the time) for the murder of Anne Tennant, aged eighty years, at Long Compton, "it was proved in evidence that fully one-third of the villagers believed in witchcraft."—*Standard*, Dec. 16, 1875.

RANDOM THOUGHTS IN RHYME.— PSYCHOLOGICAL ODDITIES.

By THOMAS BREVIOR.

PART II.

Let us leave our philosophers now for awhile,
You must bore pretty deep in them ere you "strike ile;"
And when you have tapped it, you are still not quite sure
Though it freely may spout, that it flows very pure.

I don't like the reasoning called *ad captandum*;
And so only fire off a few thoughts at random
At what I have seen among men as I find them;
If wide of the mark there is less need to mind 'em.

I need hardly say I found great variety
In this modern Babel we call "society;"
I can only just give you a taster of these,
As the cheesemonger does when you're buying your cheese.

There are souls I have known so exceedingly small
You could scarcely aver they existed at all;
So shrivelled and lean, half-starved and cadaverous,
Depleted and wan,—not fit for a rat or mouse.

And some that I wot of in church and in cloister,
Lie sluggish—shut up in their shell like an oyster;
Beside them the soul of a tinker like Bunyan
Would be as a pumpkin compared to an onion.

A strange sort I have heard of—perchance you have known,—
Who live it is said upon sheep-skin alone;
With their soul incarnated in six and eight-pence,
They can't afford conscience,—it's too great an expense.

For the learned professions I own great respect,
But in every flock we may black sheep expect;
To good men and true I'm sure an offence it is,
But this I remark by the way in parenthesis.

What is stranger than fiction—there are souls who still
Are spirits in prison—fast shut up in a till;
Or, (though poor in the wealth of the soul's currency)
Bound and clasped in a bank-book are marked "£. s. d."

I can't vouch for the legend that some Aldermen
With large waistcoats have their soul in the abdomen,
And their heaven near Cheapside,—whose fe-li-ci-tie
Is a plate of green turtle—*en suite*—apple-pie!

Like the tale of King Lud (which I've nought to do with,)
Or the *Corn-hill* near by—it may all be a myth;
But although City landscapes the liners may forge,
It can certainly show a magnificent *gorge*!

A question has been raised of gravest importance,
By Rabbis and Doctors—who should have had more sense,—
Affecting most deeply of every station,
A considerable part of the world's population:

Do Eve's daughters have souls? Well—of some I have known,
It can hardly be said they have souls of their own :
I am sure we all hope it may not be so one day,
But they are most of them owned now by one Mrs. Grundy !

A most terrible creature whose word is their law ;
So remorseless and cruel, not caring a straw
For these butterfly souls—poor victims of Fashion ;
Who worship her with most infatuate passion !

Some bore holes in their ears, some tighten the waist ;
While some cripple the feet, others glitter in paste ;
And in order to give their complexion a grace,
Madam Rachel they get to enamel the face !

And others who of sense show a plentiful lack,
Will now dye their hair golden, now turn it to black ;
Not what's inside the head is their care but what's on it,
And how they shall look in that "love of a bonnet !"

Would they not look more charming with health's ruddy glow,
Than like models of beauty from Madame Tussaud ?
What marvel that souls so enervated are—shall
I much err if I say—hy-po-chon-dri-a-cal !

Or that some are dyspeptic, of so weak digestion,
How to live on spoon-meat and pap is the question ?
They go to soul-doctors to give them a tonic,
And get bottled relics and drugs histrionic !

The imbecile sneer that was once so effectual
When pointed at ladies pronounced "intellectual,"
Like the Blue-stockings Club has become obsolete,
Though a rare bird of that kind you sometimes may meet :

Excepting by sinners most stupid and hardened,
The offence to their owlships might surely be pardoned :
What a happy idea in these lords of creation
To think woman born but for their recreation !

With Juvenal, they would like to keep woman a fool,
Lest they should have to go to a woman to school :
O wise men of Gotham ! a dame-school, indeed,
May as nearly as possible be what you need !

Yet for these some excuse may perhaps be found, when
We find women among us who fain would be men,
And usurp all the functions thereto appertaining,
Their own proper duties too often disdaining.

A sect called the "strong-minded" don't care a button
For nursing of babies, and roasting of mutton ;
But will mount the stump boldly, and fierce enough, rage
Against "tyrants," and for Amazonian suffrage :—

Proceedings which though they may make a sensation,
Do not excite in us a high admiration ;
And dare I but here venture to offer a hint,
For what Nature has made them they might rest content.

Any claim that the sex is by them represented,
Is what I am sure must be deeply resented ;
The wiser sort grieve over such indiscretion,
But this by the way is a little digression.

They may have equal rights to talking of bunkum
 With the member for Stoke, or the late Mr. Duncombe ;
 But the good of perpetual public spouting
 Political rant, one may fairly be doubting.

That politics should be made more effeminate,
 Is surely a notion not well to disseminate ;
 To true "rights of women" I urge no objection,
 But hold that they lie in another direction.

A power they wield which is quite independent,
 Reaching far deeper than all Act of Parliament ;
 A bad bargain 'twould be to exchange e'en in part
 For political pottage their sway o'er the heart !

Of souls gentle and brave who pursue worthy ends,
 I am proud I can number a few as my friends ;
 Where so much is found of vexation and vanity,
 Men and women so true ennoble humanity.

Could I ever express here in adequate phrases,
 My sense of their talents, their virtues, and graces ;
 To those who don't know them 'twould little matter be,
 But modest humility might deem it flattery.

I only allude to this now as the critical
 May think me too much disposed to be cynical ;
 And hope there's no harm in a laugh when it is
 Only at what seem so like eccentricities.

I mean no offence to sex, class, or profession,
 In ought I have written ; if any expression
 Should have seemed to my readers a little at fault,
 They may just take it *à la discrétion* with salt.

Who does not confess to a soft predilection
 For a soul finely moulded of tender affection,
 With graces so winning his heart it entangles,
 And—though Sadducee—own the existence of Angles !

In these days of forces named "*psychic*" and "*od*," it is
 No marvel to find Psychological oddities ;
 I have given a sample or two, but you know,
 More might bring on me a writ *de lunatico*.

What becomes of some souls from this world I can't say,
 But some folk though (I trust they may not have their way)
 Affirm—as they tell us without fear or flammings—
 To a place for souls neither worth saving nor damning.

I think that's a slander, and venture to hope
 That in "other-world order" all souls may have scope :
 And who, did he candidly make full confession,
 Would not own to plenty of room for progression ?



A VISION.

[The following short Paper is from a Clergyman who was for some sixteen years in the Church of England, but left to connect himself with what is called the Catholic Apostolic Church. He is evidently a very powerful writing medium, and is frequently compelled to leave his bed in the night to write automatically. He has paid but little attention to Spiritualism, having few sympathisers in the church to which he belongs.—ED. S. M.]

GOD speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not; in a dream, in a vision of the night, when sleep falleth upon men in slumbering upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction; and thus hath He done with me, His servant, in these days, in that He opened my eyes and my ears that I should see and hear in a vision of the night the things which God hath in store for men by the hands of His elect. As I slumbered upon my bed and slept, the angel of the Lord came unto me and touched me, and said, "Arise, and come with me, and I will show thee of things that shall be." And I arose and followed him, and he led me upwards through many countries, and over many cities exceeding beautiful to look upon, and towns wherein men laboured and wrought with glad hearts and willing hands; and he brought me unto one city which appeared to me fairer than all the rest, and, resting upon a hill covered with trees and with green plants and with flowers, and every sweet smelling herb which the Lord hath made. And in the midst of the plain, which was on the top of the hill, I beheld this city, and in the centre thereof the Temple of the Lord, even the Lord of the whole earth; and the angel which was with me led me by the west gate thereof, and through the streets, and he brought me unto the great gate of the camp of the Lord, wherein, on the North, and the South, and the East, and the West dwelt the high priest, and the priests, and the Levites, who ministered unto the Lord. And he led me unto the north porch of the Temple, and brought me into the vestibule thereof; and I looked and behold a temple exceeding great and high, so that the roof thereof could scarce be seen for its loftiness and the length thereof; so great that I could not discern the end thereof; and a vast multitude of pillars on this side and on that, separating the inner space of the temple from the outer, and over these the arched passages round about the house, and over these also the windows very high and lofty, through which the house of the Lord was lighted by day. And as I looked, behold at the sides of the temple, between the pillars in the wings thereof,

many altars, and a priest ministering at each altar, each in the language of his own nation. And I turned unto the angel that was with me, and said, "Sir, what be these, and what do they in the house of my God?" And he answered, saying, "These are the priests of the nations, which worship the Lamb, and they do offer the memorial which He commanded, each in his own tongue, and with the rites of his fathers, who set in order the worship of the Lord, according to the light the Lord had given to each." And I greatly marvelled at the sight, and I turned to him again and again, and spake, saying, "Sir, who are these which worship here?" And he answered, saying, "This a priest of the Church Jerusalem, and he offereth according to the Liturgy of James the Lord's brother, and these be members of that Church which worship with him." And I said, "Who are these worshipping at this altar?" and he said, "These be certain disciples from Ephesus, and their priest doth minister for them according to the rites delivered unto them by John." And I said, "Who are these also at this next altar?" And he answered, "These be Christian disciples from Rome, who worship the Lord according to the form which Gregory and his fathers received from Mark the Evangelist." And again I asked, saying, "And who are these?" And he answered, "These are from Spain, and according to the Liturgy which they heard from Paul so worship they the God of their fathers. And these are disciples from Gaul, who also worship after the pattern received from John and Paul." And I beheld and saw many others from Armenia, and from Greece and from Moscow; and according to the rites of John, the golden-mouthed, and of James and of Basil, did they offer to God the Holy Oblation. And I beheld them also from India and the coast of Malabar, and they offered in the manner which Thomas the Apostle had delivered to them. And I beheld also those from Anglia and from Germania, and from Syria, and from the lands beyond the sea, and they worshipped God after the rites of their forefathers, as their patriarchs and rulers had received them. And after this I looked toward the East, and behold, the Sanctuary of the Lord appeared unto me so glorious, that I could scarce look upon it, and an angel of the Lord, in garments exceeding bright and dazzling to the eye, and adorned with every colour, and with gold and precious stones, and he offered unto the Lord the Holy Oblation, and around him were seven other angels and a multitude of priests and deacons of the church, and they chanted a song unto the Lord in a tongue which none in the flesh could know (but they who were in the spirit knew), and it seemed like the tongues of many nations, and they sung praise and glory to God on high. And then went up a

mighty cloud of incense from the hands of the angel, and from the angels and the priest that were ministering, and the house was filled with the sweet odour therefrom. And I turned to the angel which was with me, and he, seeing what I would say, answered me, "This is the worship of Heaven. This is the worship of Him who sitteth upon the throne and of the Lamb who redeemed, and the Dove who sanctified, and who are One in Him who sitteth on the Throne for ever and ever, and He hath sent His servants, the apostles and prophets, to testify these things, and to gather in One the company of the First-born, who are scattered in all churches, and bring together the vessels of gold and silver, and the garments of beauty, that the Lord may be worshipped with a perfect worship; and, as thou sawest, the many altars, and the many priests offering thereon, so of their prayers and intercessions nothing is lost, but they are gathered up in the censers of the priests around His Throne, and these again in the golden censer in the hands of the angel who offereth the Holy Oblation." And I fell upon my face and wept with exceeding joy when I heard these things, and I worshipped and gave thanks unto my God, who sent His servant to show me these things whereby I might comfort the hearts of those who mourn for the desolation of Zion, and grieve in the anguish of their souls for the things which are surely coming to pass in the day of rebuke and blasphemy. And the angel said unto me, "Let us now go westward, even unto the outer court, and thou shalt see what the Lord doeth there among the children of men."

Then he led me out by the west gate, by the fountain, into the outer court; and, behold, a sight exceeding marvellous to behold, for in the outer court I beheld those of the seed of Jacob and the house of Israel, and they kept festival unto the Lord with great gladness and rejoicing, greater than in the days of old, and went to and from the nations of the earth; and beyond these I beheld the children of Persia, who worshipped the Lord by fire—after the holy precepts of their teacher Zoroaster did they serve and worship Him who made heaven and earth; and I beheld also those from India, and from Arabia, and from Ceylon and from China, and after the precepts of Brahma and Buddha, and their fathers and teachers, did they serve the God of Heaven. And the angel that was with me, seeing me to marvel at these things, said, "These are the nations of the Gentiles, unto whom God, in times past, hath sent teachers and prophets to guide them, that He might not leave Himself without witness among them in doing them good and giving them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with joy and gladness; for, as His servant Peter said, 'God is no respecter

of persons; but, in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him,' therefore 'their prayers and their alms come up for a memorial before God.' Lo! these are the nations that have worshipped the Dove, even the Great Spirit the Queen of Heaven, but have not yet followed the Lamb, for they have not seen Him; but when the time is come they shall see Him and they shall rejoice in His light." And as I continued to look behold a great number issuing forth like a stream toward the East, and they entered by the gate of the house of the Lord, and, coming into the outer court, they beheld the glory of the Lamb and His Bride, and they worshipped, and they went down into the fountain and ascended from it with garments dazzling to look upon for their whiteness; and they looked upon the Lamb and toward Him who sat upon the throne, and they worshipped Him for ever and ever, saying, "Glory and honour and worship be unto Him who hath redeemed us out of every nation and language and tribe. Great and marvellous are Thy works, O, Lord Almighty, and all nations shall come and worship before Thee, for just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints, and glorious is Thy beauty, O Virgin Queen, Thou Wisdom of the Eternal Father."

And as I was returning from where I stood, near the outermost gate, and entered the house, behold, the altars and worshippers, which I had before seen, had passed away, and in the place of each, between the pillars, I saw a door opening into a chamber, and there was only the one altar and the one congregation, clothed with white robes. And I turned unto the angel and spake unto him, saying, "Sir, the many altars and various rites which I beheld are now no more—what meaneth this?" And he answered and said unto me, "The priests which thou sawest are joined unto the great company of priests at the high altar, and the rites which they celebrated are gathered up into the one great rite and liturgy of the Church of the First-born, which worships before the throne; these chambers, which thou seest, are the chambers of these priests, where they wait to receive and direct those who inquire of the Lord in His temple, and seek to learn the more perfect way, which He hath shown by His servants, whom He hath sent before His face." And I wondered greatly at these words, and I said, "Sir, when shall these things be, and the time when this vision shall be accomplished?" And he answered me, saying, "Speedily, for the day of the Lord cometh when all things shall be dissolved and purged by fire; and the synagogues of the nations and the houses, which men have called by their own names, shall be tried by fire; and that which is gold (true) shall remain, and that which is dross (false) shall be purged away. Then shall

the Temple of the Lord arise, and His house shall be built on the mount which He hath chosen, and it shall be a house of prayer for all nations, and all men shall come and worship before Him."

Then shall be fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophets: "It shall come to pass in the last days the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it, for behold a King shall reign and rule in righteousness. He shall prosper and execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days shall the righteous flourish and abundance of peace; so long as the moon endureth all kings shall bow before Him, all nations shall do Him service. His name shall be continued as long as the sun, and all nations shall call Him blessed. Incense shall be offered unto Him and daily shall His name be praised."

CHARACTER SONNETS.

J. M. L.

Of round full thought, in firm yet modest guise,
Conviction clear and strong, and feeling deep,
With judgment large and ripe, in counsel wise!
Many the fruit of thy life-work shall reap;
But chiefly those who toil, brave earnest men,
Who work together for the common good;
Aiding with thought and knowledge, tongue and pen,
The fuller sense of human brotherhood.
Thy faith unshaken 'mid the storms that roll;
With calm persistence stedfast to the end,
True to the right as needle to the pole,
And true in time of need; a firm fast friend.
A noble intellect and heart combined,
What higher type of manhood shall we find?

M. E. T.

GENTLE and gracious as the summer air,
Serene and placid as the evening sky,
Yet full of human feeling, tender care
For all who need thy care; when thou art nigh
With kindly sympathy, thy influence,
Like genial atmosphere with healing balm,
Soothing the o'er-wrought brain and weary sense,
Brings to the troubled heart thy own deep calm.
If there be truth in legend quaint and old,
That in compassion to our human kind,
Spirits of finer, more ethereal mould
Become incarnate, one in thee we find.
The angel soul with mortal form doth blend,
The perfect wife and mother, neighbour, friend. T. S.

REVIEWERS REVIEWED.

BY THOMAS BREVIOR.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

FRANCES POWER COBBE is one of the ablest and most thoughtful writers of our time. Her contributions to what is called liberal theology are all marked by earnest purpose and a reverent spirit, no less than by high culture and breadth of treatment; and contain much with which the Spiritualist finds himself in sympathy, and to which he can give his most cordial assent. For instance, her essay "On the Future Life" is one of the most effective presentations of the abstract argument ever penned, wanting only that complete demonstration which the facts of Spiritualism alone supply.

Were it possible for our reviewer to enter upon the examination of this subject in an unprejudiced spirit, and to give it a patient thorough investigation, her conclusions concerning it, whatever they might be, would fairly claim a kind and degree of consideration far beyond that to which, under present circumstances, they are entitled.

The *New Quarterly Magazine*, for January, 1876, contains an article by her, under the title of "Backward Ho!" in which Spiritualism is inserted (sandwich fashion) between old china and mediæval upholstery on the one side, and modern ritualism on the other, as alike illustrating the backward movement over which this article is a lamentation.

We should have preferred that our reviewer had borne in mind the homely proverb "let every tub stand upon its own bottom," and that she had discussed Spiritualism separately on its own merits, and abstained from forcing it into company not of its own selection, and between whom there is as little agreement as there would be in a trio of which Miss Cobbe would be the central figure, with Mr. Bradlaugh on the one side, and Mrs. Girling on the other. Without discourtesy, we may leave these unwilling companions of our solitude to go their several ways, and take care of themselves as best they may, indeed we so far agree with the reviewer as her article is a forcible protest against extravagance, affectation, and dilletantism in taste; and ecclesiastical pretension and theatrical properties in religion.

The chief objection to Spiritualism of our reviewer is that implied in the title of her article. It is, in her judgment, a response to the cry of "Backward Ho!" the revival of superstitions deemed long since dead, the ebb of the advancing tide

of progress; an epidemic folly and delusion, which it is to be hoped an undeceived world will soon laugh out of existence. The spiritual medium is but the magician, the sorcerer, the necromancer, in a modern dress and under the slightly different conditions of modern society.

In this view there is certainly a latent, dimly perceived, and misapprehended but important element of truth; but it is a totally fallacious conclusion that Spiritualism is a movement of reaction, a transient phenomenon to be explained away and laughed out of the world. The reverse of all this is true. Spiritualism is one of the most permanent facts of human nature to which all history and literature bear testimony. It has, indeed, been spoken of as "the survival of savage thought," but it has been accepted not only by savage tribes, but by the most advanced nations—those which have most deeply and enduringly impressed their influence upon the world.

The seers, prophets, and miracle-workers of Judea, the sibyls of Rome, the oracles of Greece, were objects of national faith for centuries, and were revered by all classes, and by many of the greatest minds of antiquity, and exercised a most potent influence on private and public life. If we go to still earlier nations, China, India, Egypt, or pass down through the Christian centuries, we still find Spiritualism in the oldest civilizations as well as the newest, and it is only in exceptional times like that of the dead formalism and mechanical philosophy of the eighteenth century that this faith has faded and grown pale. Now here is a persistent fact in human nature of which the sceptic has never given an adequate account; and it must be remembered that this Spiritualism has not been held, and is not now held as a mere opinion or belief, but as matter of knowledge, of actual and ever-recurring experience of men in every age, and notably in our own. It is simply puerile to imagine that this universal and pregnant fact is a mere foolish, passing fashion, to be laughed away, or disposed of by calling it ugly names, or referring to some of its obscure and misunderstood phenomena, and the ignorance and superstitions associated with them in past ages; as idle as the notion that religion may be got rid of and sent into ignominious exile by the same weak device.

And the voice within blends in harmony with the voices from without. The testimony of ages is the response to the passionate yearnings of the human heart. The reviewer expresses the "lingering regret" with which we sorrowfully abandon so dear a hope, and the wish "that it were possible to lift a corner of the awful veil, or pierce but by one lightning glance the cloud which receives all the dead out of our sight. Can it really be

(we cry out in our despair) that there are no means in heaven or earth to obtain the bare assurance that our beloved ones live and are blessed?"

Miss Cobbe is a devout theist. How then can she reconcile her faith in the goodness of God with the belief that this universal instinct is not truly a Divine voice, to which experience is the seal and witness; but only a mockery—the whispered suggestion of a delusion and a lie?

One objection urged against Spiritualism by the reviewer (oddly as it may sound) is that of Materialism. We are told "it starts by ignoring the eternal verity that spiritual truths can only be spiritually discerned, and frankly proposes to learn them by the help of bewitched upholstery, and grasps at faith in immortality through a tea-table and an alphabet."

It is, indeed, profoundly true that the higher verities of the soul cannot be apprehended by sense. In vain you sweep the horizon with a telescope to discern Him "who is not far from every one of us," or to discover a constellation of the virtues. But is it Materialism to "look through Nature up to Nature's God," to trace in His material creation evidence of His existence and attributes, to say with the sweet singer of Israel, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." Is natural theology altogether a blunder? Is the psalm from which I have quoted materialistic? Are the Bridgewater Treatises open to the same grave objection? Not only is the Infinite Spirit inaccessible to mortal vision, seen only by the glorious material garment with which He has clothed Himself, but is it true also that—

We are spirits clad in veil,
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communings fail
To remove that shadowy screen.

It is only by and through the material form, and by material symbols, that we know and apprehend each other. The piety and charity, in themselves invisible, we discern in looks and words and acts the outward visible signs of inward spiritual grace. How else is character to be apprehended? Why then this scorn of the tea-table and the alphabet? I have spoken of the splendid essay on the "Future Life," by the reviewer, but it is difficult to understand how this could have been put before the world independently of the material agencies upon which she pours out the unmeasured vials of her contempt. Not a few among us have by these and like agencies, been brought from "crass materialism" to a recognition of "the higher verities of existence;" and we may well bear in mind the proverb not to speak ill of the bridge that has carried us safely over. How

much does Christianity itself owe to the material signs and manifestations of a Divine power manifested more especially in its first stages! The Resurrection of Jesus, His presence discerned by the natural senses, was the cardinal and common faith of the Primitive Church;—the evidence on which it chiefly based, and still bases, its belief in immortality. I know, indeed, that the reviewer in her "Future Life" contemptuously dismisses the Gospel narratives of the Resurrection (as she does modern relations of kindred nature) as "Jewish ghost stories," but at least she will not deny that on this material foundation a grand and lofty spiritual edifice has been built.

It is painful to note the levity and looseness of statement concerning Spiritualism and Spiritualists even in our leading reviews and magazines, but from a writer with the high reputation of Frances Power Cobbe we had a right to expect better things; yet either she is very imperfectly acquainted with the facts, or (what we are unwilling to believe) is very careless in stating the truth about them.

For example, we are told that Miss Kate Fox, of Hydesville, N.Y., at nine years of age, gave the first impulse to the Spiritualist movement, "by *contriving* a hailstorm of raps on the floors and walls of her abode," and again that "she was (it is said) convicted of imposture." This lady is now the wife of a respectable well-known barrister, and is permanently resident in London, which is mentioned as an additional reason why charges so grave as those of contrivance and imposture should not rest upon a mere ("it is said"), but should either not have been made, or have been fully substantiated. The latter course is not even attempted, and were there any proof of them, we may be sure that we should not now, after the lapse of more than a quarter of a century, still have to wait for its production. Again, we are reminded of "the exposure that has driven poor honest Mr. Robert Dale Owen out of his senses;" although that this was the cause of his temporary insanity has been flatly denied in the public press, severally by a son of Mr. Owen, and by his physician, and later by Mr. Owen himself, whom time and rest have now, happily, restored. The cause of his affliction, all agree, being a brain overworked by incessant literary activity, and of which his physician warned him long before the "exposure" referred to.*

The confession of Buguet, to his having forged spirit photographs, is, of course, triumphantly referred to, but no notice is taken of the circumstance that no sooner had Buguet escaped

* Mr. Owen will probably be in London when this meets the reader's eye; in that case the reviewer may learn the truth of the matter from his own lips.

to Belgium, and found himself free to speak the truth, than he retracted his confession wrung from him under pressure of threats of heavy fine and long imprisonment, unless he implicated M. Lemayre, whose free and scathing strictures in the *Revue Spirite* (of which he is editor) on archiepiscopal nonsense and sophistry had excited all the malice of the ecclesiastical faction, while the scandalous unfairness with which the trial was conducted, and evidence for the defence suppressed, is altogether ignored.

From a writer of Miss Cobbe's dialectical skill we naturally looked for far different and better stuff than is here made to do duty in place of argument. Spiritualism is to her simply an afflicting spectacle. She stands over it "like Niobe, all tears," wringing her hands, and exclaiming "Dear me! how dreadful! Who'd have thought it! to believe in ghosts in this enlightened nineteenth century, in which we can predict the transit of Venus, and have invented unconscious cerebration and the magic lantern! How shocking!"

Recovering a little her composure, she naturally looks about for the cause of this strange portent; and here her natural acuteness stands her in good stead, and she concludes that the conquest over "superstition" is not so complete as was fondly imagined, "the ground has been swept over, but not conquered." So far as Spiritualism is concerned, this is certainly true. The ground has never been conquered. Even of its least understood, but lowest and most debased and perverted form—witchcraft, the historian of Rationalism confesses that it was never disproved. The human mind was simply directed into another channel, that is all. This, no doubt, was highly useful and providential, a necessary step in the progress of the race. But man liveth not by bread alone, and chemistry can never satisfy the hunger of the soul; and if an ignorant unbalanced Spiritualism has its evils and dangers, its farthest opposite is certainly not free from them, though of a different kind, and Spiritualism is not the swing of the pendulum to the other extreme from this, as our reviewer seems to think, but the more equable sway and movement which ensues after the violent impulse from either side has spent its force. It takes up whatever it finds true in the so called "superstitions" of the past, and it as far as possible verifies, extends, and guards this by the greater knowledge and better methods of the present, and is the fusion of the best elements of both.

Against the professional medium the reviewer is particularly bitter, evidently on no better ground than that of her belief that all are rogues, a proposition that will at once be dismissed with a smile of pity or contempt by those who are moderately

well informed upon the subject. When the so-called Spiritualistic manifestations take place in the absence of any professional medium, they appear to her to "deserve a most careful and respectful attention," as instances of the "profoundly interesting psychological phenomena of unconscious cerebration, and unconscious self-deception," and she thinks "it will be time enough to attribute the occurrences noted to an ultra-mundane source, when a single revelation has been made (at a non-professional *séance*) of a truth previously unknown to every member of the company." Well, let the reviewer turn to the "Report of the Committee of the Dialectical Society," and she will find that all the spiritual manifestations witnessed by the Committee took place in the absence of any professional medium, and if she turns to the evidence of Lord Lindsay, F.R.S., and to that of Mr. Manuel Eyre, and of Signior Damiani, in the same report, she will find facts communicated through the medium unknown to any of the party in each instance.

Perhaps, with the aid of Dr. Carpenter, the reviewer will tell us how unconscious cerebration explains the facts witnessed by the Committee, and those attested by the witnesses named, and the kindred experiences of Mr. Wallace, Mr. Crookes, and other credible witnesses.

One feature of Spiritualism we especially commend to the consideration of the reviewer—it is eminently scientific. It is based on fact and experiment, and it proceeds by the inductive method of investigation. It may be added that its acceptance is generally proportioned to the degree of freedom from prejudice, and the extent and thoroughness of the investigation. Its opponents, on the other hand (as Professor De Morgan has pointed out), pursue the pre-scientific method, they follow the high *à priori* road, and from assumed "first principles," from considerations based on the nature of things, what must be, and the naturally possible and impossible, the accordance, or otherwise, of alleged facts with what they understand to be the laws and order of nature, and so forth. More frequently they follow only the vulgar method of uninquiring, ignorant, rude, arrogant denial, coupled with invective and ridicule. Which of these two camps practically adopts as its motto "Backward Ho?"

AN OLD CLERGYMAN'S STORY.

"I'm afraid your mind is full of very odd fancies. I'm afraid some Spiritualists have been talking to you," said I.

"Perhaps they have," said she. "Anyhow, I believe that spirits can return and speak to the people they love. If you admit that our souls live hereafter, you can't be sure they have not the power to go wherever they will."

"I suppose you'll be tipping the tables and bringing raps from unseen knuckles upon the walls, some day," said I. "Pleasant, that, for your old grandfather."

"Grandpapa," said she, "I don't suppose I shall ever be able to do anything of the sort; but if I die before you I shall come back and take a peep into this old study—see if I don't."

She tripped away, my little grand-daughter, as she said this, smiling at me over her dimpled shoulder as she went. She was only sixteen, and as fresh as a rosebud. Die? One could not think of death and her at the same moment. Probably

Death would have taught me more
Than all the living world doth know,

ere she was fully a woman.

I sat down at my desk again and opened my newspaper, but somehow I could not fix my thoughts upon it. I kept thinking of Nelly. I knew that she had gone away to spend the bright holiday hours with her boy-lover. I knew that life was at its sweetest with her now, but I had lived too long not to know that many troubles lurked in ambush for her on her long life-path; that sickness and sorrow and death must come to her as they come to all, and it troubled me to know it. Why could she not remain the same sweet thing, half-child, half-woman, that she was now? Oh, inevitable time! inevitable fate! how powerless we feel when we think upon you! I could shelter Nelly beneath my roof, I could leave her all the fortune I possessed, but I could not prolong her life one hour, or set her in any place where calamity could not reach her.

I went out into my garden and tried to dispel the sadness that had stolen over me, but it increased instead of vanishing. I grew more unhappy than I had often been under the weight of actual trouble, and I grew nervous also—a sound made me start. I glanced down the lane continually, as though I expected something, and with alarm. Yet why, I knew not.

It was a warm summer afternoon, and the air was full of the perfume of the flowers; the birds sang, the sky was unclouded blue. The world was so beautiful that I wondered that I could be sad. At last I began to think that I was ill, and I returned

to my study, and cast myself upon the sofa, hoping to lose my melancholy in sleep. For a long while I lay wide awake, thinking of all the sad events of my life, of all the possibilities of the future, short as my years were likely to be. Suddenly it came into my mind that I might even lose my little Nelly, and be left quite disconsolate. "It has all come from her foolish talk," I said; "I will shake it off." Then I took the Bible and tried to think of all its promises, and I sought the consolation of prayer. This calmed me, and at last I did actually sleep, and so long and soundly that when I opened my eyes it was twilight.

I sprang to my feet, and rubbed my eyes. I had a strange feeling, as though I had been out of my body, and had seen something I could not remember. A glass of water restored me, and then I began to wonder whether tea was ready, and why they had not called me. Suddenly, a voice I knew well called "Grandpa!" I looked around. Nelly was peeping in at the window. She had thrown a white shawl over her head, and had drawn her face down into a great solemnity of expression. She just showed it for a moment, and then disappeared.

"Ah, you witch!" I cried; "I see you." "Grandpa!" she said again, in a faint, melancholy voice—"grandpa!"

She had come to the other window, and was standing there. Her white shawl was wrapped all about her, and her hands were crossed upon her breast. I laughed again. "Come in, Mistress Ghostess," said I. "Appear." Again she was gone. And—it was very absurd of me—I began to feel very uncomfortable. "Nelly!" I called. "Come here. I am not well, and you make me nervous."

Once more, as I spoke, I saw the face at the window, with the white shawl disposed about it like a shroud, and the child had done something to make herself look deadly pale. "Nelly! Nelly! Nelly!" I cried. "This is going too far. This is disrespectful, when I command you to cease such antics. You may think it fine fun, but I——Come in, Nelly."

This time she obeyed. She entered the door. She had cast the white shawl entirely over her. A point hung over her face, and on either shoulder. The long, black hair dropped heavily like wet hair, it occurred to me. She walk straight to the sofa and lay down upon it. As she did so the white drapery dropped back, and I saw great drops of water drip from her tresses upon the floor. I rushed towards her. Her garments were soaked through, and clung to her. Her face was white, and her eyes wide open and glazed. In one hand she grasped a long bunch of wet water-grass.

"Nelly!" I screamed. "Nelly, darling, what has happened? Speak!" And I stretched forth my hands towards her. They

touched nothing. There was nothing to touch. The sofa was empty.

"My brain is disordered," I said to myself. "I have been dreaming." But I shook with terror like one palsied. "Nelly! Where is she?" I cried, and I rushed out into the garden calling her. As I reached the gate I saw a man rushing up the lane, staggering and stumbling as he ran, and I saw that it was Charlie Steen, my Nelly's boy-lover, and that he was so wet that the water dripped from him, and his feet marked the dust of the road with wet spots. "Charlie," I screamed, "where is she? My little Nelly, where is she?"

He clasped his hands to his head and stared at me. "Where? where?" he echoed. "Oh! an hour ago she was with me. She was mine. Now—Oh! tell me where she is! The boat upset with us. I tried to save her. I—could not!" and with a horrible groan he fell upon his face at my feet.

My little Nelly was drowned. A few hours after she lay upon the sofa where I had seen her lying in my vision, with the same woful expression on her face, and the same long bunch of water-grass clenched in her hand. Her dripping dress clung to her as I had seen it, and the great drops of water dripped from her hair to the floor as I had fancied that they did.

I live still, an old man of eighty, and I am so near to my meeting with all I have loved and lost that I can speak calmly even of that time; but I cannot tell what it was that I saw in the library that woful day long gone, or whether my Nelly's spirit really came to me. All that I can say is, that it all seemed to me as I have written it down.

HYMN FOR THE "CHURCH OF THE LORD."

To Jesus Christ be glory given
By all on earth and all in heaven;
His wisdom reigns, with power and love
O'er every world, beneath, above.

The heavens delight to own Him Lord;
The earth, when it receives His Word,
Angels and men unite their lays
In great Jehovah Jesu's praise.

All things that move from Him have
birth
Whether in seas, or air, or earth:
In man, of Him an image made,
His love and wisdom are displayed.

In Heaven His being emanates,
To form and fill angelic states
From out its sun; whose light and heat
Make their immortal joys complete.

Its heat their love awakens still
Supplied to their receptive will;
Their wisdom opens at its light
And fed therefrom, shines ever bright.

The worlds of nature He has given
As means for training man for heaven;
And all their vast arrangements tend
To this divine-celestial end.

Then O, my soul! His power adore;
Obey and love Him evermore;
All evils shun, all fables fly,
For He, to help is ever nigh,

Then will He freely enter in
To make thy heart and mind akin
To angels, in His heaven above,
A form of wisdom and of love.

E. P.

THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IN THE GIFT OF THE SON.—A SERMON.

BY FREDERIC ROWLAND YOUNG,

Minister of the Free Christian Church, New Swindon.

THE Apostle John, in his first Epistle, iv., 9 to 11, says: "*In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*"

There is a fulness of meaning in these inspired words which no poor efforts of ours will ever be able fully to exhaust. But we may stand upon the edge of them, and look down into their clear, untroubled depths, and see there reflected an image of the eternal truth of God. Let me try with such words as I am able to command, to spread out before you two or three thoughts suggested by this utterance of the mind of God to His children—an utterance which has come to us through John, as a medium, but which had its source in nothing short of that Eternal Spirit of God, without whose teachings man at his best estate is ignorant, and can but "stumble upon the dark mountains" of error.

It ought, I think, to be laid down as a first principle upon the very threshold of this subject, that as love alone can understand love, so only those in whose hearts the love of God is a vital fact, can in any degree understand the words of the Apostle. "The natural man," or man considered as to his intellectual nature merely, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Our only hope, therefore, of catching a real glimpse, however slight, of the meanings hidden beneath these words, lies in our having some experimental knowledge of God's love, not merely as an outward fact, but as a realised blessing in our own souls.

God's love, like everything else which essentially inheres in Him, must have existed from all eternity. What He now is in Himself He must always have been, because, so far as the principles of His Being are concerned, He is "without variableness or shadow of turning." But although the love of God is, and must be, an eternal fact, it can be appreciable by us, and available to us only as it is manifested. That which is to us an unknown thing is all the same as though

it were not. But all love seeks, from its very nature, to manifest itself, because it is an active and not a passive principle of being. Love, whether the direction it takes be good or evil, right or wrong, struggles to go out of itself, and fix itself upon some object external to the being which it rules. I should say, therefore, that the manifestations of God's love, considered as an object in the Divine mind, must have been as eternal as the love itself. In accordance with this idea we find such statements in the Scriptures as the following: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." (Jeremiah xxxiii. 3.) "According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ephesians iii. 11.) "Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times." (1 Peter i. 20.) Undoubtedly the love of God has been manifesting itself in varied forms ever since there were any objects upon which to fix itself.

But the text leads us to a special and the greatest manifestation of that love, namely, the sending of Christ into the world. And it is beautiful to notice how, through the pages of the New Testament, the gift of the Son is so frequently spoken of as a token, and the very highest, of God's love towards man. Our Lord Himself, when He told Nicodemus that "God loved the world," said that He "so loved" it as to "give His only begotten Son" for it. The Apostle Paul, too, in his Epistle to the Romans, consoles the Christians of that day by the consideration of the self-sacrifice made by the Father in giving the Son for the redemption of the world; for he says: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things." To the same purport is another statement, which we find in the same Epistle, and which tells us that "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." And when the Apostle, in writing to the Corinthian Church, endeavours to stir up the benevolent feelings of its members towards the poor disciples in Judea, he bursts out into the exclamation: "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift," words which, as it seems to me, find their only and fitting meaning by being referred to Him who is indeed the greatest and best of all the gifts which the Father has made to His children.

The gift of the Son is a peculiar and most impressive manifestation of the love of the Father. But that gift, that manifestation, had a purpose in it. Christ was given to the world by God, that the world, through living sympathy with Christ, might live; in other words, might have, in all its

fulness, spiritual life, which, after all, is the only true, the only abiding life. This gift of God to the world was made that the world, through Christ, might receive a Divine assurance of God's perfect willingness to forgive His erring, wandering, and guilty children; an assurance no man was ever yet able to find in the teachings of his own nature, or the manifold revelations of God in the external world. There was another object, too, to be served. God designed, by this gift of His Son, to put it within the reach of His children to have fellowship with Himself in a large measure, in an intenser form than they could otherwise realize it. And, as a matter of fact, the words of Paul and Peter have been verified in millions of cases since they were first of all written:—"Through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." This He has done in every case in which the human soul has given itself up to the Divine leadings of its divinely-anointed Saviour.

The preciousness of this gift of God in the form of His Son was an unsolicited one, and certainly undeserved. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." It is true now, and ever has been, that "it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." While we were thoughtless about God, He was thoughtful about us; while we were alienating our hearts from Him by wicked works, He was always going after us, and drawing nigh to us, that He might redeem us; until at last, in order to put the reality and depth of His love beyond the possibility of reasonable suspicion, He gave what to Him was the greatest treasure He had in the Heavens above, or in the earth beneath; He gave One who was "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His character," to seek and to save poor lost sinners, and thus gladden the heart of the Universal Father, who must delight in the highest good of all His intelligent offspring.

Now if the Son of God be the gift of the Father, and if that gift is to be received as a manifestation of the Father's love, then Christ is to be looked upon as the outward and visible manifestation of the inward and invisible love of the heart of God. There is also this other truth to which the Apostle John refers. God's love towards us should be a motive constantly impelling us to manifest love towards our brethren. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Yes, we ought. It is the very least return we can make to Him whose love has been shown in so manifest a manner. At the same time I have a deep and ever present conviction that

nothing short of the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord will ever be sufficient to create, nourish, and send forth into the world pure and practical love for man as man. There may be, here and there, fine natures touched with an excess of benevolent feeling, and freely imparting their stores to others; but take man as man the world over, and only as he realizes the love of God, and especially that manifestation of it which He has given in His Son, will man's love for man be spontaneous, pure, constant, deep, and unconquerable. The philanthropy which is to last and do thorough work in the world, must find its hidden springs in the manger of Bethlehem, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Cross of Calvary, the empty tomb in Joseph's garden, and the Christ who, having overcome, has sat down on His throne, and now sways His sceptre over millions of redeemed spirits.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

DEBATE AT MIDDLESBOROUGH BETWEEN DR. SEXTON AND MR. FOOTE ON SECULARISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

A DEBATE which created an unusual amount of interest and excitement in the town of Middlesborough-on-Tees, took place between Dr. Sexton and Mr. G. W. Foote, Editor of the *Secularist*, on the evenings of Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, May 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th. The question discussed on the first two evenings was "Is Secularism sufficient to promote the Well-being of Mankind." Mr. Foote taking the affirmative and Dr. Sexton the negative, and on the last two evenings, "Is Christianity of Divine Origin and adapted to the Real Wants of Mankind." Dr. Sexton taking the affirmative and Mr. Foote the negative. The Odd Fellows', in which the debate took place was crowded to suffocation, the largest audience assembling on the last night. Both speakers were enthusiastically received by their respective supporters, and when Dr. Sexton sat down after concluding his final speech, which brought the debate to a close, the applause was deafening and was accompanied with the waving of hats and handkerchiefs by the vast assembly. The following article on the first two night's debate appeared in the *Daily Exchange* of May 19th:—

The seemingly never-ending fight waged by the Middlesborough Secularists against the Middlesborough Theists has again seen a revival. This week has been one of almost unprecedented prominence in this respect, as a controversy of no mean importance is being carried on between Mr. G. W. Foote, a well-

known Secularist, and Dr. Sexton, a man of evidently deep learning, and one who rejoices in believing, not in nature alone, but in what all her aspects point to, her Creator. For some time the Atheists—pardon, messieurs—the Secularists, of our town seemed to have the best of the arguments, as they had, as a general rule, none but ordinary work-a-day thinkers to oppose them. They produced the greatest stars of their order, and we had Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, with his continuous stream of sarcasm and fiery sputterings; Mr. Charles Watts, his obedient echo; Mr. Foote, with his clever, though sometimes slightly ungrammatical, elocutionary declamations; Mrs. Harriett Law, with her revolting pictures and street-corner harangues of virtue and morals; and last, but not least among them, Mrs. Annie Besant, who was, perhaps, the most tolerable of the whole series. After such brilliants had lectured, exhorted, and taunted, until the townspeople were beginning to be tired out with their nonsense, the last back-breaking straw to patience was laid on by Mrs. Law, stating in the course of a lecture, that there was to be a campaign in Middlesborough against the Christian religion; she stated that as long as the winter lasted meetings would be held under sheltering roofs, and when fine weather came there were to be open-air demonstrations! This no doubt pleased those of her own party, as did also the wonderful victories which were obtained on platforms over sometimes not very qualified persons who had the audacity to go forward and discuss and argue questions of great moment, and requiring deep thought and study, with those whose lives had been spent in finding means to discompose rather than convince such troublesome customers. At last comes the debate first mentioned. Dr. Sexton places himself before a Middlesborough audience not for the first time. He has visited us before, and has given convincing proof of his capacity. In his first two nights' debate with Mr. Foote, he showed himself to be a complete master of his position, and by the way he treated the so-called Secularism, showed conclusively that it was not a system of morals nor a religion, and was totally unworthy of comparison with the advantages of religion. He showed that it possessed no positive principles, with the exception of those it borrowed from existing systems of morals, and which were in existence and advocated long before Secularism was called into being. Without going further into the subject matter introduced in attack and defence of Atheism, we may refer to the relative positions taken by the debaters. Mr. Foote has probably spent the most of his life in the study of Secularism "under the best masters," and holds at his finger ends all the little "points" and "dodges" calculated to take with the generality of audiences, and is so far confident (as he looks to be) that he is in a fit position to take part with credit in a public debate. But in Dr. Sexton he has no ordinary man to deal with. Dr. Sexton has seen both sides of the question under dispute, and has had such extensive experiences, both in advocacy and repudiation of Secularism, that he is fairly entitled to take upon himself some share of responsibility for the doctrines which he now, in his maturest thought, considers to be most satisfying to his mental and moral wants, and which he has come to the conclusion are best calculated to promote the welfare of men in all ages. His life has doubtless been a study of the relative merits of the two systems under debate, and when on the platform he shows himself ready at any moment to point to particular passages in the works of Secularistic writers, which works, he humorously observes, are not numerous—his carpet bag containing them all. He throws a dart of particular keenness at such men as Mr. Foote, who are continually spouting about "Science, the only providence," "Science, the only redeemer of mankind," when he says the last thing taught or even mentioned, in a practical sense, in the much-paraded "Halls of Science," is that very "science" which seems to rest so heavily on their brains. Indeed, he showed that some of the greatest leaders of the party are lamentably ignorant of some of the simplest scientific facts, and quoted an instance in which Mr. Bradlaugh made a mistake of which the veriest schoolboy, knowing anything at all of science, would be ashamed. Dr. Sexton has acquitted himself in the present debate with great credit to himself, and, let us hope, permanent benefit to his hearers.

DEBATE AT RUSHDEN BETWEEN DR. SEXTON AND DR. COLLETTE
ON SPIRITUALISM.

The *Medium* gives the following account of the debate that took place at Rushden, last month, between Drs. Sexton and Collette:—"For some time past the Spiritualists of Rushden have been much annoyed by the abuse of their cause on the part of the Rev. Dr. Collette, a Baptist minister from Ringstead. Dr. Collette has given two or three lectures in Rushden, and on one occasion held a sort of debate with Mr. Mahoney of Birmingham, and he declared his intention of confronting any champion the Spiritualists might produce. This piece of boasting the Doctor has had to pay dearly for, since we venture to say that his own friends must have been heartily ashamed of him on the occasion of his recent encounter with Dr. Sexton. This last debate took place on Tuesday evening, the 2nd of May, in the Temperance Hall, Rushden,—Dr. Sexton having lectured in the same place on the previous evening on 'How I became a Spiritualist.' Dr. Collette had previously pretended to expose Spiritualism from a scientific standpoint, and to explain the whole thing by odic force, but his utter ignorance of science was speedily laid bare by Dr. Sexton, who convicted him of using terms, the very meaning of which he did not understand. Dr. Sexton opened the debate in an elaborate and eloquent speech of thirty-five minutes. The chairman (Dr. Blunt of Northampton) then stated that as Dr. Sexton had taken up five minutes more than his time Dr. Collette would also be allowed thirty-five minutes. Dr. Collette then rambled on about all sorts of subjects for just fifteen minutes, and ultimately sat down, leaving twenty minutes of his time unoccupied. The chairman expressed his surprise at this, which gave rise to a good deal of uproar. Dr. Sexton good-naturedly remarked, 'Never mind, I can use the time if he can't.' Thereupon the champion of Spiritualism delivered another telling speech. Dr. Collette took up his next quarter of an hour by reading a small tract issued by the Birmingham Spiritualists, with what object it was difficult to see. Dr. Sexton's next reply was a crushing one. He told the audience they had been trifled with, that Dr. Collette had failed to advance a single argument against Spiritualism, and that in point of fact he was as ignorant of the subject as he was of logic and the rules of debate. The meeting was a very large one, the Temperance Hall being crammed to suffocation. Dr. Collette's friends were occasionally noisy, especially two Baptist ministers, who were found constantly interrupting. Dr. Sexton, however, did not spare them, for in one of his speeches he pointed to them, referred to their ill manners, and said they had done more to disturb the

meeting than all the rest put together. The discussion may be considered a glorious triumph for Spiritualism. Even Dr. Collette's own friends must have been disgusted with him; and it is said that although he once boasted that he had buried Spiritualism in Rushden, its resurrection has been such that he is not likely to confront it again."

DR. SEXTON AT BRIXTON.

On Thursday evening, April 27th, Dr. Sexton delivered a third Lecture on behalf of the Brixton Psychological Society at the Angell Institute. The subject taken up by the Doctor on this occasion was "The Mission of Spiritualism." All present seemed greatly interested, and at the close of the Lecture several questions were asked and satisfactorily answered.

THE "ENGLISHMAN" ON THE "SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE."

The *Englishman* of April 15th contains the following notice of the *Spiritual Magazine* :—

What is Spiritism? Is it real? Is it a delusion? Is it a trick? These are questions that must have suggested themselves to many. Some of the highest in the land—we believe the Queen herself is said to be a Spiritist. Some of the most intellectual in England, in France, in Russia, in the United States, are believers in Spiritism. Are all these people fools? We think not. The periodical whose title heads this paragraph lets a great deal of light, month by month, in upon this at present abstruse subject. Those who desire to know cannot do better than to seek out the truth within its pages.

SPIRITUALISM IN LIVERPOOL.

Our old and much esteemed friend Dr. Hitchman has issued the following notice in reference to future Spiritualistic work in Liverpool :—

TO MY SISTER AND BROTHER SPIRITUALISTS, IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

May it please you! I beg to notify, herewith, that (God willing) Meyerbeer Hall, 5, Hardman Street, in the centre of this Town, will be inaugurated as a new Temple of Truth, or Spiritual Church of the Future,—on Whit Sunday next, June 4th, when it is hoped that all friends of THE CAUSE DIVINE (to whom it may not be inconvenient, or disagreeable) will lend the favour of their countenance, either by personal attendance, or sympathy of soul, *i.e. if separated in body not disunited in spirit*. Mrs. Nosworthy has kindly consented to give an Address in the evening, at 7 o'clock, on "Alleged Experiences of The Future Life," and I hope to make some introductory observations on "The Vocation of The Truthseeker" in this our age and nation, at 3 o'clock in the Afternoon, John Priest, Esq., will preside.

Faternally ever,

WILLIAM HITCHMAN, M.D.

The Editor of The Spiritual Magazine, &c.

THE "HAFED" CONTROVERSY.

The *Christian News* returns to the defence of "Hafed" against the attacks of Mr. Howitt in the May issue of the *Spiritual Magazine*. The following article has appeared in its pages since that time. It is entitled "Howitt *versus* Hafed."

An article from the pen of William Howitt appears in the *Spiritual Magazine* for May, entitled "Hafed the False." Reference is made to what S. C. Hall had written in commendation of *Hafed*, and to the answer offered to the *Christian News* to the objections made to *Hafed* by Mr. Howitt in the former number of the same Magazine. The commendations of the one writer, and the answer to Mr. Howitt's objections by the other, are all but ignored in the article entitled "Hafed the False." Mr. Howitt says he has not read *Hafed*, and won't read it. His second article would be partly explained if he were to tell us that neither had he read the replies to his former paper, although he refers to them. Controversialists have been somewhere recommended to use soft words and hard arguments. Mr. Howitt's words are some of them very hard, or, at least, very unsavoury, whatever may be said of his arguments. He speaks of a "snake in the grass," "falsehoods," "putrid flesh," "carrion" ideas, the "absurdity of which is too monstrous for conception," "blasphemous trash," intellect "reduced to a condition of imbecility," "tangled mass of diabolical fable;" and the odd thing is, that after treating his opponents to such a dish, he says, towards the conclusion of his paper, "We are all liable to error. Let us not anger or accuse one another." Was ever advice given more condemnatory of what had preceded it? Keeping the good advice in mind, we would ask, How can the article on which we are commenting be accounted for? There is no attempt made in it to meet the answers given in the *Christian News* to the objections to *Hafed* in Mr. Howitt's first paper. The old objections are repeated, and some new details are introduced, but the principle of the objections in the second article is the same in the first. It is held to be absurd, monstrous, to say that the Saviour learned anything in Persia because he had his Father's teaching every day—because in him dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Along with this it is contended that, as a Jew, he could not have travelled among Gentile peoples without having been contaminated, while it seems taken for granted that all were bad in the Gentile nations. We are also directed to *Hafed's* alleged doctrinal errors as a proof that he was false and an agent of the great deceiver. Now, without intending to anger and accuse, let us look at these points and see if the position taken up by Mr. Howitt can be accounted for. Sure we are it cannot be maintained. Are doctrinal mistakes a proof of falsehood when one is bearing testimony to what he has seen and experienced? How many good honest men have in this world held serious doctrinal mistakes? How many such men and denominations of such men in the present day hold such mistakes? And surely such a Spiritualist as Mr. Howitt is must be aware that doctrinal errors do not, as a matter of course, take themselves summarily off from the mind when one enters the spirit-world. The probability rather is that doctrinal mistakes that do not interfere with the love of the heart to the Saviour of souls may remain unrefuted for an indefinite length of time. Although ecclesiastical bodies have not usually done so, Scripture attaches more importance to the spiritual life—leading to "doing to the Lord"—than to intellectual accuracy, and no doubt it is so in heaven. The principle we contend for, is, that doctrinal mistakes do not involve dishonesty in giving testimony relative to what has been seen and experienced. We do not say that *Hafed* is throughout orthodox, but we do contend that there is no good reason for suspecting his honesty—no good ground for denying that "as he thinketh in his heart, so doth he truth express." A minor objection offered against the possibility of travel in Egypt or Persia by the Redeemer is that, because of the restrictions of the ceremonial law, individual Jews "could not possibly travel into far-off countries without contamination." But if it had been so, how could Joseph and Mary have gone to Egypt and resided there for a

considerable time? Mr. Howitt refers us to "the horror with which the Jews saw Jesus enter the house and eat with the publicans of the Romans even." There could be some force in this reference if Jesus had been of the same mind as these Jews, if he had been a bigoted Pharisee, a slave to the traditions of the elders; but he, on the contrary, uniformly set his face against the doctrine of Scribes and Pharisees on such points. He took his meals without having baptised his hands, and taught that contamination of the man was produced in a very different way. The restrictions of the Jewish law never taught them to ignore or undervalue anything that was good in Gentile lands, or to learn any good they could teach. Had there been a Job in the land of Uz after the Mosaic law was given, God would still have spoken of him as "my servant," and would have commended him in as far as he had spoken the thing that was good concerning God. Jesus told the people that the men of Nineveh would rise up in judgment against the men of that generation. He testified that the faith of the Canaanitish woman excelled any thing that he had met with in Israel. It must not be forgotten that, the law given by Moses notwithstanding, God never was a respecter of persons. In every country they that were of faith were blessed with faithful Abraham, and in various instances there was more faith amongst Gentiles than amongst Jews. As formerly noticed, the Wise Men that came from the East on the birth of Jesus, came under divine guidance. It is too bad to speak of such as pagans. But Mr. Howitt's energetic protest is chiefly directed against the idea that Jesus could seek for *any* teaching in Persia, on the ground that He was Divine, had His Father's teaching every day, was Lord of the Universe, &c., &c. Such reasoning would have force if there had been no such thing as the incarnation, with the various details of voluntary humiliation which it involved. But with the incarnation in view, Mr. Howitt's principal protestations, denunciations, and reasonings go for nothing. We formerly entered, at some length, into the relation of the incarnation to his objections to *Hufed's* narrative. It is not necessary here to repeat, but we may respectfully ask Mr. Howitt to look where the principle he argues from leads to when carried out to its legitimate length. If it is absurd and monstrous to hold that Jesus could require to be taught any thing in Persia because he was the Son of God, might we not go on to say, seeing He upheld all things by the word of His power, how monstrous to conceive that He ever required to be nursed and carried by His virgin mother? Seeing he was Lord of the Universe, how monstrous to believe that having gone down to Nazareth, he was there subject to His mother! Will Mr. Howitt say that when a babe in the manger in Bethlehem Jesus had conscious knowledge of all that existed in the Universe? If not, he has other questions to answer before he can be entitled to write as he has done. Jesus needed drink and rest at the well of Samaria, and did not think it "contamination" to accept drink from the woman of Samaria, although she expected that he should. Although we cannot comprehend much that incarnation involves, we must not in our reasonings on the subject in hand ignore it.

FEMALE WORK IN THE CHURCH.

The Rev. John Hall, in the *New York Observer*, points out an important work for women, which all can engage in: "There are many congregations and churches that lack a nameless something, and for want of it are weak. They have many people, but the people do not cohere. They are not so much a building as a heap of stones. They want to be 'joined together and compacted.' How is it to be done? We men are hard, angular, intractable. Women must help us. Besides stones, there must be mortar—soft, yielding, adaptable. Women have gentleness, tact, quickness of perception. Your true woman feels, as by an

instinct, what it is proper or graceful to say or do, and has done it while your clumsy, elephantine male intellect is torpid, or is groping to feel for something proper in the circumstances. Ladies that fear God and do His will can build up here. They can help to make people feel at home. They speak gently and kindly words. They can subsidize social influences, and render them 'helps to the truth.' They can frown ill-nature out of a circle, and by their approval evoke the aid of the timid and hesitating."

MRS. SEAVER.

The following article, which appeared in the *Boston Sunday Herald* of February 20th, was sent to us by Mr. Epes Sargent, who, in a private letter, remarks: "Having at three *séances* at Mrs. Seaver's witnessed phenomena similar to those recorded in the subjoined communication, I transmit it as worthy of publication in your Magazine. Mrs. Seaver has had to run the usual gauntlet of charges of fraud, imposture, &c., but the phenomena witnessed in her presence are really inexplicable under any of these theories."

To the Editor of the "Sunday Herald."

Having read articles in the *Banner of Light*, written by Thomas R. Hazard, of Rhode Island, and Rev. Allen Putnam, of Boston, giving descriptions of satisfactory sittings for materialization with Mrs. Seaver, of 34, Bromley-park, Boston, I was induced to attend two of her *séances*. The lady was a perfect stranger to me, and, with the exception of a "good afternoon," is now; and my only object for writing this is to promote truth and do justice to a much-abused medium. The circle room was a front one on the second floor, directly over the reception room, where the visitor's outside garments were left. The floor was bare, and in the corner of the room, where there was no window or door, was the cabinet, which consisted of a green cambric curtain, about nine feet in length and three deep. There was an opening in the curtain where the end and front met: also an aperture a foot square midway of the curtain, and perhaps four feet from the floor. The enclosure contained nothing but a chair. The circle or investigation was composed of 18 or 20 men and women, who looked to be as sane and respectable as are to be found at any church or family gathering. They were seated round the walls of the room in front of the curtain. But instead of taking hold of hands, as is customary in circles, to form a "battery," a stout wire was passed round and held in the hands. The room was dimly lighted by a lamp placed on a shelf and enclosed by pink tissue paper to tone down the light. After sitting a few minutes, one could see all the persons in the room with the exception of the medium, who sat in the cabinet. The manifestations commenced with the materialization of an Indian squaw, who appeared at the long opening, and soon after walked into the room and shook hands with a number of the circle. She was larger than the medium, resembling in dress and action what she purported to be. In a few minutes after the squaw returned to the cabinet, a sailor boy, dressed in midshipman's uniform, pulled back the curtain and showed himself. Then a young man appeared, dressed in a suit of black, who wished a lady to come to him. Soon a gentleman, the husband of the lady—I understood afterward a Universalist minister—was called up. After they had evidently recognised the spirit and manifested their affection, they took their seats. This gentleman, whose seat was next mine, then told me that he and his wife recognised their son, who died eight years before; that at one time, while near him, he dematerialized until his head was only two feet

from the floor; and that he also gave him a private sign which he had promised to give him a short time before, through Mrs. Rockwood, of Boston, a well-known reliable medium. When I first sat down by the reverend gentleman, I asked him if he had examined the cabinet. "No," said he, "I do not care about the cabinet: if I see any of my departed relatives I shall know them." He probably would not have been satisfied with anything short of that. After this some 15 or 20 light bodies, the size of heads, appeared at the aperture, but they were so indistinct from where I sat that I saw but few outlines of faces. Those seated near the opening saw them more distinctly, at one time recognising two sisters. They generally formed and dissolved quickly, but sometimes remained long enough to manifest affection for the friends who were specially called up to see them. The second *séance* was similar to the first, with the exception that two Indians materialized, one of them being much taller than the medium. Also an old lady, wearing a white cap, and a female spirit who materialised head and hands at the aperture, and whom I recognised as a friend who passed away a number of years ago. I felt the spirit's hands on my face, then my head was drawn to hers, and I know that it was natural flesh and hair which I felt. The head dissolved into the atmosphere while I watched it, there being no motion up or down. The hands did not appear to be joined to arms, but were materialised separately, looked life-like, and felt warm. There could have been no deception about these manifestations for the following reasons:—The minister and his wife and myself are positive that we saw our friends. Please notice that the evidence is strong, from the fact that two persons recognised the same spirit. This spirit almost instantly reduced himself to nearly one-third of his height, which it would have been impossible for a mortal to do. While my spirit-friend was showing her affection for me, the child "Willie," who controls the medium, talked to me, and I thereby knew that the medium was sitting in her chair. At one time a female spirit materialised at the long opening, while another showed her face at the aperture, the child-control holding conversation with a lady near the curtain at the same time. When the sailor boy shook good-bye to the circle, his hand was so elastic that it elongated more than twice its original length. The medium could not have carried extra garments about her person to have personated so many characters. Neither could she have had time to make the changes, or been able to without being heard by some of the circle who sat near the cabinet, while it was often still enough to hear a pin drop in any part of the room. There was this peculiarity about the spirit-faces: that they were lighted enough to be easily recognised, yet did not reflect the light. I should have said that at the second *séance* a male spirit called me to the aperture—which was done by bowing the head when the right person asked, "Is it for me?"—shook hands with me, and patted me on my head hard enough to be heard in the next room. I did not know the spirit, neither did he profess to know me. He wore whiskers, and his hand was as natural and firm as my own, yet the face, although masculine, had a slight resemblance to the medium's. The vital magnetism, by which all spiritualistic manifestations take place, is drawn from the medium, causing them to partake more or less of the individuality, mental or physical, of the medium. One may visit half a dozen different writing mediums and receive from each convincing tests from departed friends, with much of their individuality, and yet the medium's individuality will be more or less blended with it, the latter being more noticeable when the medium is well known to you. To many this kind of talk will pass for moonshine; yet there are others—more than the uninformed are aware—who *know* it to be God's truth. One reason why spirit-communion is not more readily accepted is that it seems too good to be true; but that it is so may be easily proved by most honest, unprejudiced investigators. And it would be better for those who are strangers to spirit-manifestations to begin with some of the rudimentary ones, before examining materialisations, as the mind will then be prepared for the more startling phenomena. It is said that a hearty meal of roast beef is injurious, if not fatal, to a starving man, his stomach first requiring a little broth to nourish it; so the minds of many need to be developed by the minor phenomena, before the major can be appreciated or accepted.

Salem, February 13, 1876.

W.

THE REAL AND THE UNREAL.

The interior world is sometimes called the Shadow Land ; but, to a true conception, it is neither shadowy nor unreal ; the outward world is not the only reality—is but a part of the universe—is the teaching of every one's consciousness. And in the philosophy of Paul it is ranked as but an inferior part : " We look not," says he, " at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen are *temporal*, but the things which are not seen are eternal." To the outward eye and the materialistic conception, the inner world seems unsubstantial and vague ; and yet the consciousness comes ever returning that such a world exists. Who has not had, at times, a conception, transient perhaps, yet vivid, of an interior universe opening inward from the central Christ-point of the heart ? Who has not stood upon the threshold, and gazed into a world luminous with a mellower light than that of the sun, a realm of truth and beauty and unspeakable harmony, where the soul, unconscious of evil, is subdued with the deepest joy at mere existence ? And was it an illusion, and of such stuff as dreams are made of, or is the outward world an illusion and a sham ? One thing is certain, the outward *is* temporal, and its fashion passeth away ; its " cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces " dissolve, and what men would believe eternal melts at the touch of time, and changes with the passing year. And we believe that the realm of the real lies towards the interior, and that the outward, that seems so substantial, is real only where it touches the interior.

Man stands at the confluence of two vast worlds. On the one hand is the outward, stretching far away from him, till it fades into the inane ; on the other are the convergent lines of life and spiritual space, leading to God. The centre of all life and good is God—the reality of all realities—the essence of all that is substantial. And in proportion as we approach the interior, we touch and drink in life and find truth and solidity. The lines of life converge and meet in God ; the lines of death diverge and recede from Him.

To all things there is an interior and an exterior—essence or soul, and surface, form, outward visibility—spirit and letter. And to all pertains the language of Christ : " The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life ; " that is, if we deal with the exterior, the surface or form of things, we find but shadow and deception. The surface of things, in consequence of its contact with evil, is dead ; and in proportion as we come into connection with it, and seek happiness from it, we lose sympathy and unity with the world of life—with God and the heavenly hosts ; and only as we

turn to the interior vitality of things do we find the central good—happiness and health for soul and body. And all the struggling of the soul after rest—the longing for some immortal aliment—the weary disgust with which the soul returns from its outward search to the work of central inquiry, are instincts inviting us to the “better land” of interior life and reality. These yearning aspirations were not given to mock and torture us; they *must be* the tokens of an accessible reality.

Our own interior, the soul-centre of our being, is *all* that we *are*—our substance—that which makes us realities. And the only things that do us any good are those that enter into us and touch our interior life. Christ said to His disciples: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life;” and it was because they touched the core and soul of their being that they were so. Such words have a soul *in them*; and it is this soul which conveys to us their real effect. The simple word will do us no good: it excites expectations that never will be fulfilled; it gives a show of truth, but the apparent benefit turns out to be chaff. And again we repeat, this principle, that the letter is death but the spirit is life, can be applied not only to the Bible, and to language, but to the whole circle of existence; all things have these two sides to them, letter and spirit, interior and exterior; in all *transactions* there is letter and spirit; and from all facts and events, both great and small, we get benefit or disappointment according as the view we take of them is exterior or interior. Viewed from the outside they may appear *dead* and *meaningless*, but viewed from the interior standpoint every event will be found to be full of *meaning and life*.

God is the source of all good, knowledge, truth, beauty, and enjoyment, and in Him these things are only to be found. But God is a spirit, and those that seek Him must seek Him in spirit and in truth. He dwells in the interior of things, and is not to be found in the outward and inane. And if in our search after truth, beauty, and enjoyment, we stop in the outside, the crust, and take up with the “fleeting show” of the sensuous world, we shall inevitably be disappointed, and find cheats and not realities.

And in this great interior, where God and Christ are, is all that is of worth in the universe. There are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The instances of individual genius which have surprised the world from time to time with productions of imperishable beauty in poetry, music, and the creative arts, are but so many jets bursting up through the crust of superficial life from the interior harmony of heaven. We wonder at the results produced—attribute them to the fortunate possession of genius, and seek to know no more; when the truth

is, there is a door in our own hearts through which we may enter into the wide world of beauty, of which the highest productions of genius are only specimens and reminders. And that is the resurrection world, the realm of life. There is where Christ and the Primitive Church, the angels, and the hosts of heaven are; it is the home of all the beloved of God.—*The Principle.*

A PECULIAR DISEASE.

The New York papers contain an account of a strange case of convulsive seizure, which has baffled the skill of more than sixty medical men of high standing. The subject of the attack is a well-to-do farmer, residing at Springfield. He is healthy, hearty, and stout; but, on the 14th November, 1858, he was suddenly taken with convulsions, which lasted till on or about the 28th. Every year for eighteen years he has been similarly attacked. Medicines are of no avail whatever. He is as healthy and strong as ever, and entirely well with the exception of these attacks. His convulsions are terrible to witness; nothing like them has ever before been seen, and perhaps never will. He experiences no pain while they are upon him, is perfectly conscious all the time, knows what is going on, but cannot prevent it. His violence is such that it requires the united strength of five men to hold him. His contortions are described as simply horrible—every muscle in his body seems to writhe and twist, his limbs and arms are flung about convulsively, his face is contorted to a hideous degree; and, as one informant said, he “would assume all manner of shapes, actually tying himself into a knot, until it seemed as though every bone in his body must break.” The superstitiously inclined attribute it to the devil’s machinations, and believe that the man is veritably “possessed” by his Satanic Majesty. The people of Springfield are personally conversant with the facts of this case, and numerous persons have witnessed Mr. Hutchison’s contortions when the “spirit was at work.” The whole thing looks amazingly like demoniacal possession.

JOAN OF ARC.

The *Times* Correspondent at Rome writes under a recent date:—

The last scene of the first act of Shakespeare’s play of *Henry VI.*, Part the First, contains a prophecy which is about to be fulfilled. One of the chief objects which have brought Monsignor Dupanloup to Rome at the present time is, we are informed, “a cause which interests not only France, but the

Church itself"—the canonization of Joan of Arc. It is intended to inscribe her name in the golden book of the celestial peerage, and verify the words put into the mouth of Charles the Dauphin,—

"And all the priests and friars in my realm
Shall, in procession, sing her endless praise.

* * * * *

Her ashes, in an urn more precious
Than the rich jewel'd coffer of Darius,
Transported shall be at high festivals
Before the Kings and Queens of France."

The *Voce della Verità* itself informs its readers that even Shakespeare, the greatest poet of England, testified to her claims to the nimbus, and, not without a certain significance, quotes the two lines,

"No longer on Saint Denis will we cry,
But Joan la Pucelle shall be France's saint."

The idea of canonizing a new warrior saint, and that in the person of an heroic maiden, whose devotion can be impressed upon every Dunois of modern days by the lady of his heart, is in perfect accord with the war-cry the Church continues to raise, though, indeed, the Pope tells us the battle is so fought with spiritual weapons only. The name of this saint is to be a rallying-cry for France and for the Church. The Church has disclaimed the use of the sword, but in renouncing it she has not said that, should the rumours of war become realities, she will not exert the full force of the weapons she retains—public prayer and exhortation—upon and in favour of those who may combat with arms of the flesh for the things she desires. Nothing of this kind, however, is hinted at directly in the three articles in which the *Voce della Verità* has advocated the cause of La Pucelle. The movement for her canonization at this time might be the merest coincidence. The organ for the Society of Catholic Interests presumes that not all its readers may be acquainted with the details of her history, with "that marvellous story, which is all that can be imagined of most authentic;" for, in addition to the many chronicles of the 15th century, there are two inestimably important documents which have been recently published, the two trials of the Maid of Orleans—that when she was condemned by the English, and that for her rehabilitation, ordered twenty years afterwards by Callixtus III.

But, first, in order that all may understand the full value of "her providential intervention in the destinies of her country," a brief account is given of the condition of France at that time, the disasters which had befallen her, the fearful defeats she suffered at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, the internal disorders aggravating the horrors of war waged against her by the stranger, "and it was then, when all seemed lost, that everything was saved by the work of Joan of Arc. Whence did she come? Who was she? A young country girl of eighteen years whom God brought forth from an extreme province of France—Lorraine."

To epitomize the sketch given by the *Voce della Verità*, Joan was born in 1412 at Domremy, the child of poor parents, who only knew two things, which were profoundly rooted in their hearts, "faith and patriotism." At the age of thirteen years she commenced to hear "the sweet and lovely voice" speak to her of the mercies the kingdom of France merited, and that God would send her to save it. For five years she kept the secret of her mission, but at last, convinced of its truth, she arose, spoke, and declared that the King of Heaven had charged her to liberate Orleans and consecrate the King of France at Rheims. She was declared to be mad; her parents did all they could to dissuade her, but her tenacity triumphed over all obstacles. She traversed 150 leagues to find the King. He concealed himself among his courtiers, but she recognized him at once. The theologians of Poitiers interrogated her, but her good sense overcame their captious questionings. The doctors were convinced; armour was given to her, a standard which she asked for, a squire, a page, a chaplain; and her sword was found where she indicated, behind the altar of the Church of St. Katherine of Fierbas. Intrepidly she put herself at the head of the troops,

passed the English lines, made her way into the city, which, beleaguered for six months, was on the point of surrendering, and, behold! in eight days she had delivered it. Without losing time she commenced upon the Loire that famous campaign in which, with the velocity of lightning, she gained the victories of Jargeau, Beaugency, and Patay. Joan insisted with the chiefs and the King, who still hesitated, that they should make a daring march upon Rheims. Everything gave way before her. Troyes yielded after a short attack, Rheims opened her gates, "and the young King received the sacred unction symbol to the people of his legitimacy."

The mission of Joan was accomplished. She had liberated Orleans, and the King having been consecrated, she desired to return to her own country; but this the King would not permit. She remained; but very soon everything became changed with her. The flames of her heroism wearied the common courage of the vulgar; the invidious began to persecute her. The "Voice" spoke to her again in mysterious language, but she resisted its counsels, and suffered a defeat before Paris because she would not listen to it. At Compiègne she fell into the hands of the Burgundians, who sold her to the English. They paid a king's ransom for her.

Joan taken, the English felt that they had the fortunes of France in their hands. They loaded her with chains, and, after removing her from prison to prison, subjected her in the tower of Rouen, during the six months the trial lasted, to indescribable tortures and outrages without name. "And it is only right to say that nothing was done, nothing was attempted for her liberation, either by the King or by any of the others save Dunois," who one day, by a *coup de main*, nearly succeeded in snatching her from the hands of her Judges. By a refinement of hatred her Judges were chosen, not from among the English, but from among the French. But this is not all; "they were Churchmen, and one, a Bishop, whose name should be unpronounced—the wretched Dauchon—presided." Thus all which Joan had held most dear in the world, the Church and France, seemed to turn against her to persecute her. "But no, they were not the Church, for, indeed, the Church, by a solemn sentence, condemned them and rehabilitated Joan." For six months these vultures held the poor dove in their talons, and marvel only could be expressed at the wonderful answers she made to the insidious questions put to her. With invincible firmness she maintained her two assertions, her submission to the Church, and the truth of her mission. She made an appeal from her hired Judges to the Pope, but it was not listened to, and she was condemned to the stake. "Hold high the cross that I may see it to the last," she cried to the good monk who assisted her, and as the flames enveloped her she exclaimed three times, "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!" Some of the English fainted. One asserted that he saw a white dove fly forth from the flames, and another cried out, "Unfortunates that we are, we have burnt a Saint." Joan was no more, but although extinct, her name was a terror to the English, and speedily was her prediction fulfilled that they should be driven out of France.

"It is necessary to remember that England was to become schismatic, and if France, absorbed by that nation, had been drawn within her orbit, and associated in her schism, what peril would not the Catholic faith have run in Europe and in the world." "The well-being of France, and it may be said also, in part, of the Church, is the fruit of the deeds and the death of Joan of Arc."

As soon as Celestine III. ascended the Papal Throne he appointed the Archbishop of Rheims, together with the Bishops of Paris and Constance, and a member of the Tribunal of the Inquisition, to examine into the circumstances of her trial, and of her life and death. The result was the complete justification of her innocence, her virtue, and her greatness; but the Pope did well in going no further. The hatred between England and France still existed, and the Church had to content herself with this act of justice.

The conclusion of the articles I give verbatim.

"But to day the illustrious Bishop of Orleans is of opinion that the circumstances which called for that reserve are no longer in existence. France and England have forgotten their rivalry of centuries, and perhaps the time has come for taking a step forward, without giving umbrage to England, by initiating

the canonization of Joan of Arc, if she was really a saint. In the life of Joan we have not only innocence, virginity, and horror of sin, but also the virtues which constitute saints—incomparable faith, the highest love towards God, a devout subjection to His will, and a profound spirit of prayer and of mortification. Joan fasted three times in the week, prayed constantly, and was fervent in approaching the Sacrament. Each day she heard Mass, shedding an abundance of tears, and in all she acted for the love of God; humble as she was pure and pious, putting from her the adulations of the people, and referring everything to the glory of God. Among the English themselves there existed a belief in her sanctity, and even Shakespeare, their greatest poet, makes the King of France say, "No longer on Saint Denis will we cry, but Joan la Pucelle shall be France's Saint." All that has been said thus far induces personages of the highest authority to believe that the proceedings for the canonization have a solid and authentic foundation, especially having regard to the two trials, in which are registered with judicial exactness the most minute, complete, and decisive details, together with the depositions of the witnesses, as if they had been interrogated only yesterday. Let us express, then, our good wishes that the noble efforts of Monsignor the Bishop of Orleans in this cause of canonization may be crowned with the most splendid success, more particularly as the virtues of Joan were those not only of private life, but of public life also, of those, in fact, of which we have, alas, so great a need in the present day. For the rest, we see in this sublime figure, not a French heroine, but a heroine of the Church and of humanity. To the Church, notwithstanding, belongs the infallible decision upon so grave a subject."

To W. B.

A MAN, whose nobility of soul, far
Exceeds that of many who tack long titles
To their names, and shame them by each
Word and act. Whate'er his birth have been,—
Whether patrician or plebeian blood
Course through his veins, it matters not,
His *life* is noble; and as such, shall be
Honoured by all true men and good.
To use his health and capabilities
For his fellow-creature's good,—
To gather the little children to
His home, and be a father to them
Who own no earthly one, is his great
Vocation. To raise the fallen,
Be they man or woman,—to help the weak,—
And to draw to heaven, they that once
Were on the highway to degradation,
Misery, and ruin,—this is his life-work.
To speak the truth whate'er the cost,
And to let its heaven-lit light flash
O'er the darkened page of error;—
To lure men God-wards by the silken cord
Of love, not by the harsh chain of fear:
And as planets circle round the sun,
And draw from that great source their light,
So he, following his Divine Master,
Imbibes from Him his Christ-like power,
But to reflect on others the same
Life-giving rays.

A. E. F.

Correspondence.

THE MAGI.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I concur with Mr. W. Howitt in deeming it improbable that Jesus visited India, or that He sojourned out of Palestine, except in Egypt, when a child, to escape the wrath of Herod. Mr. J. Penrose, and the Rev. Dr. Faugret, in their works on Chronology, seem to prove that the birth of Jesus occurred in the year of the world 4,003, in the year of the Julian period 4,709; and on the 15th day of the month Tisri—the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles—the 7th of October, new style; and, at least, four years and 79 days before the era fixed by Dionysius Exiguus, &c.

With reference to the Magi, these *savans* were mentioned with respect by Dr. Porteus, as heathen philosophers who eschewed idolatry. They were, in fact, astrologists, as Daniel was before them. A late author alluded to a Chinese *savant*, Foe, B.C. 1027, who was a Buddhist, and had many disciples. His religion was encouraged by the Emperors of China for 350 years. This Foe was stated to have issued through his mother's right side, and to have caused her death by his birth. The Tau-tre or Immortalists, notable chemists and Spiritualists, succeeded Foe. This sect was encouraged by Vu-ti, the Chinese Emperor, B.C. 177 (*Chronology of the Hindus*, Vol. II., p. 249). Foe is credited as the Founder of the Suastica Order, or Brethren of the Mystic Cross, consisting of three degrees, Apprentice Brothers, the Jao Sze, or Doctors of Reason, and the Grand Master, chosen by the Doctors. Their religion consisted in daily worship; the pursuit of wisdom; the attainment of knowledge by study, the practice of sincerity and of temperance. I refer your Biblical readers to instructive works by Dean Burgon, *viz.*, *Letters from Rome* (1860), and his Commentary on the twelve final verses in the final chapter of St. Mark's Gospel, being an argument to prove their authenticity.

Yours faithfully,

CHR. COOKE.

London, 10th May, 1876.

MR. D. D. HOME'S STATEMENTS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

DEAR DOCTOR,—It is but just now that I have seen in the *Spiritual Magazine* (p. 71) a letter from Mr. Home, in which I find the following passage:—

"When put to the test, all these rope-tyings are failures. You are aware that my cousin, Mr. Aksakof, has tried it in Russia, and a dead failure has been the result, as I knew it would be."

There is here a grave error. Of what does Mr. Home speak? If he speaks of our experience with Bredif, the rope-tyings were put to the test, and it was not a failure (see the article of Professor Boublérof, in the *Psy. Studien* of 1875). If he speaks of our *séances* with the Pettys at the Committee, it was a failure; but there was no rope-tying, because the Pettys were seated before the screen, and without being in any way secured.

There is still another passage in this letter which strikes me:—

"A book was published lately in America, and pages were devoted to a person who had power over the spirits! When one knows what the life of this person has been, it is simply monstrous that such *assertions* should be made."

What does that mean? I do not understand the logic which refutes an

"assertion" concerning the physical power of a person by an insinuation on the private life of that person. The excuse which exists for a *lapsus calami*, does not exist for a *lapsus typi*.

I beg you to translate* and publish my letter in your journal, and to accept the assurance of my esteem.

13th May, 1876.

A. AKSAKOF.

St. Petersburg, Neosky, 6.

THE EDITOR'S LABOURS.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

DEAR SIR,—Like many, no doubt, of your readers, I have perused the notes of your lectures in the May number with "mingled feelings." It is most gratifying to know that one so competent to teach as you have proved yourself to be is devoted to the diffusion of information relative to Spiritualism, while at the same time jealous for the interests of Christianity, and taking care to keep its claims in the front, and to know further that you so successfully defend Christianity against the assaults of Secularism. The work you are doing in the latter department has a value that I will not attempt to estimate. But other feelings are awakened when we read that there is immediate danger of the work in your hands both in London and in the provinces coming to a stand for want of pecuniary support. We frequently hear remarks made to the effect that one cannot say in commendation of another what he would have said if that other had not been present. Now, although I am necessarily addressing you, it is your readers, and not you, that I wish to get at, and you must try to fancy yourself not present, that I may freely speak my mind. I—and I have no doubt, many more—would consider it a universal loss to the cause of truth, in the widest acceptation of that term, if your labours were to be interrupted, or if you had to go on under any particular pecuniary burdens. You must live in order to work, and, Spiritualist as you are, you are not so spiritual that you could live by snuffing up the east wind. There must be many amongst your readers who, if they could be properly got at, would be happy to contribute so much a year to a guarantee fund, or some other form of fund, to enable you to devote without risk of loss all your energies to the defence and propagation of truth. Many would do this because of your advocacy of Spiritualism, and many more would unite because of the work you are doing in defence and furtherance of Christianity. It is not too much to expect that if an existing association, possessing the confidence of your readers generally, were to ask for money sufficient, they would get it. Or, were a few well-known and trusted individuals to form an association for the purpose, they would, as the phrase runs, "be bound to succeed." It is not for me to attempt to decide what particular form the thing should take. Let it "take any form" it pleases, so that the end be attained—i.e., that you are enabled to go on working with spirit and efficiency, entering whatever doors may be opened to you. If you were so enabled to act for two or three years, funds might be largely drawn from rates of admission that might be charged in many places in connection with your lectures; but, in the meantime, what are called for are contributions from those who are already interested. Many such cannot themselves lecture, or if they had the required qualifications for this they cannot devote time to the work. Are not all such bound to contribute of their pence or gold, that others may teach the public? I am quite disposed to assist in what I recommend to others. With all respect I would in the meantime say to the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, "I speak as unto wise (and good) men, judge me what I say."

ALEX. MUNRO, M.D.

Forres, 5th May, 1876.

* The original letter was in French.—ED. S.M.